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USSAG/7AF IN THAILAND (1973 - 1975): POLICY CHANGES AND THE MILITARY ROLE (U)

27 JANUARY 1979

PROJECT CHECO
OFFICE OF HISTORY
HQ PACAF

APPROVED FOR
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Prepared by:
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FOREWORD

The counterinsurgency and unconventional warfare environment of Southeast Asia resulted in the employment of USAF airpower to meet a multitude of requirements. The varied applications of airpower involved nearly the full spectrum of USAF aerospace weapons, support equipment, and manpower. As a result, there has been an accumulation of operational data and experiences that has been collected and documented which must be analyzed for its current and future impact upon USAF policies, concepts, and doctrine.

Fortunately, the value of collecting and documenting our SEA experiences was recognized at an early date. In 1962, Hq USAF directed CINCPACAF to establish an activity that would be primarily responsive to Air Staff requirements and direction, and would provide timely, analytical studies of USAF combat operations in SEA.

Project CHECO, an acronym for Contemporary Historical Examination of Current Operations, was established to meet this Air Staff requirement. Managed by Hq PACAF, with elements formerly at Hq 7AF, 7/13AF, and 13ADVON, Project CHECO provides a scholarly, "on-going" historical examination, documentation, and reporting of USAF policies, concepts, and doctrine in PACOM. Since the drawdown in SEA, the Project CHECO functions have been centralized in the Office of PACAF History.

This CHECO report is part of the overall documentation and examination which has been accomplished. It is an authentic source for the assessment of the effectiveness of USAF airpower in PACOM when used in proper context. The reader must view the study in relation to the events and circumstances at the time of its preparation--recognizing that it was prepared on a contemporary basis which restricted perspective and that the author's research effort was limited to records available within his local headquarters area.



CHARLES C. PATTILLO, Major General, USAF
Vice Commander in Chief

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joining the PACAF history program in 1971, Mr. Claude G. Morita has served as historian in the Office of PACAF History, as the Seventh Air Force Command Historian in Vietnam during 1972-73, and as a CHECO historian in Thailand (1974-75) and Hawaii. Previously, Mr. Morita was an intelligence research specialist and field operator with USAF intelligence at assignments in Japan, Korea, and other East Asian countries for nearly 20 years. He also served as managing editor of the FEAF Intelligence Roundup at Hq Far East Air Forces. Mr. Morita received a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature from Sophia University in Tokyo in 1962.

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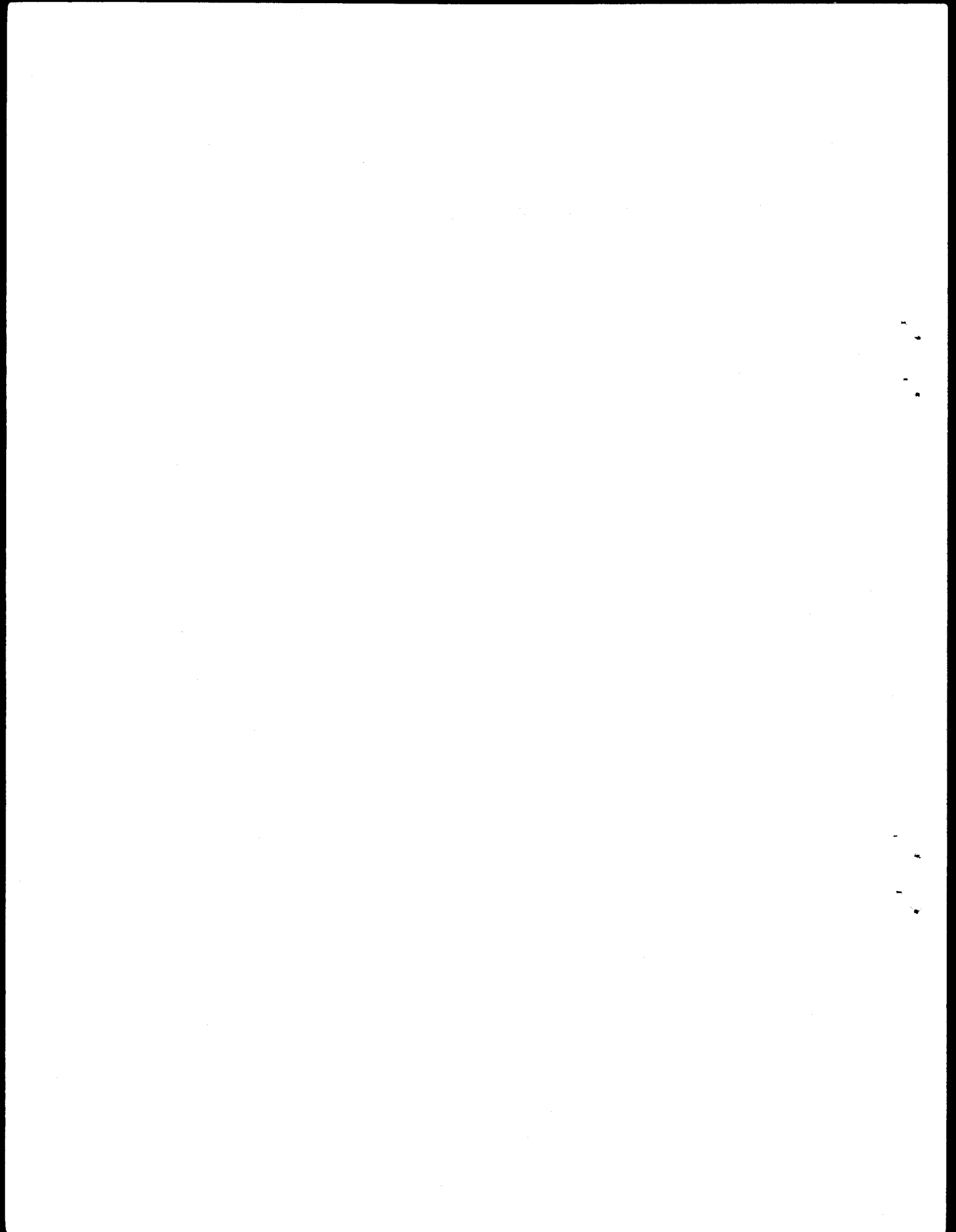
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INTRODUCTION

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(U) No examination of the role of Headquarters, U.S. Support Activities Group/Seventh Air Force (Hq USSAG/7AF), in Southeast Asia (SE Asia) would be complete without the clear acknowledgment that military operations were, as imposed by tradition,* subordinate to national policy and that the headquarters, created for the purpose of continuing the responsibilities of Hq U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (US-MACV), both influenced and was affected by the changing fortunes of foreign policy in the region. There remained the continuing need to understand that military operations and plans could not be and were not carried out as purely military undertakings. The U.S. Air Force in SE Asia found its responsibilities modified rapidly by policies as well as by technology; USAF's role in the war in Indochina through 1975 was an increasingly important one.

(U) Before all acts of force by U.S. military forces were terminated in Indochina on 15 August 1973, U.S. military participation became adjusted, from the predominant involvement of ground combat forces in the late 1960s, to the exclusive reliance on air power at the time of the signing of the Paris Accords in January 1973. There was more than passing significance to the fact that the Commander, USSAG/7AF (COMUSSAG/7AF), was an Air Force general officer after the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Vietnam. The adjustment epitomized the mood of the U.S. public and government to disengage from military involvement, particularly ground combat, on the Asian mainland. While the level of U.S. commitments to SE Asia, in its traditional sense, was lowered, the new effectiveness of modernized air weapons contributed to a realization that, perhaps, the totality of commitments had not changed at all.

(U) Making matters extremely complex for military planners in SE Asia was the disorder in the institutions of the U.S. Government which were concerned with the formulation of foreign policy. There was rancorous debate in the Congress and between Congress and the Executive Branch over their responsibilities in the making of foreign policy, particularly in the matter of war powers. Laws were passed in the period between 1970 and 1973 which placed limitations on how armed forces could be used. Chapters I, IV, and VI discuss these changes which Congress imposed on the deployment of military forces in SE Asia.

**By late 1975, the relationship between military force structure and foreign policy was required, by law, to be reported to Congress by the Secretary of Defense. The legal mandate was imposed by DOD Defense Appropriation Authorization Act of 1976 (PL 94-106, Sec 812).*

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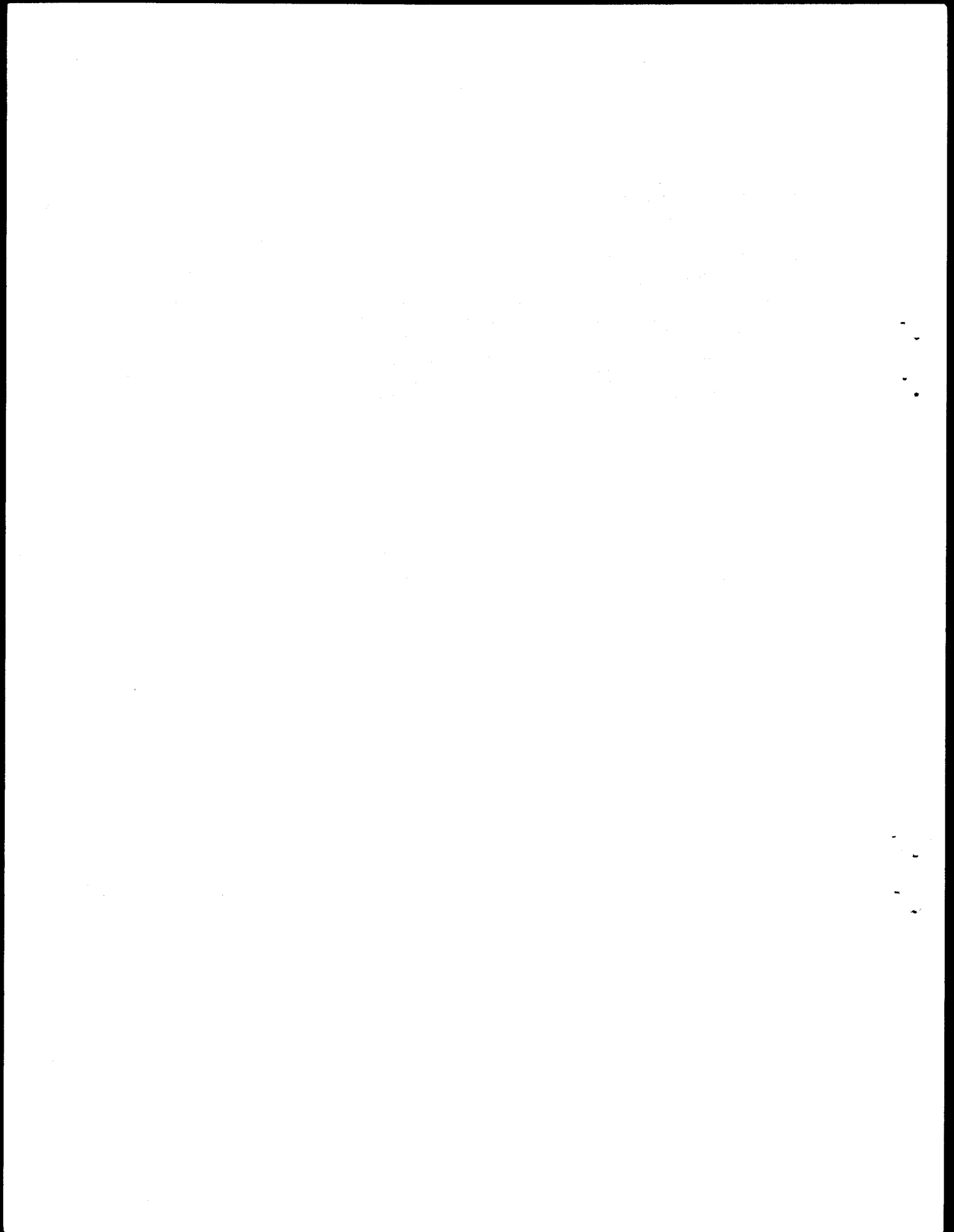
(U) Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger contended that the conceptual design for a U.S. foreign policy had remained intact during the period leading up to the dramatic setbacks of April 1975.¹ The authority to implement the policy, however, had become impaired by difficulties "almost entirely domestic on a variety of levels." The effect of the war in Indochina on Americans, creating divided opinions on its purpose, required that policy-makers, at least, should obtain a consensus. But this was not to be. Kissinger pointed to the "enormously debilitating impact" of the Watergate crisis on Executive authority as well as the changes legislated by the Congress which affected foreign policy as two factors that presented serious difficulties for those who conducted foreign policy. In a statement which revealed the depth of the loss of American confidence, Secretary Kissinger observed that these events occurred at a time when the establishment for conducting foreign policy was "disintegrated and demoralized."

(U) These were the circumstances of foreign policy within which military planners sought to find the most appropriate structure of command and control in SE Asia and alignment of deployed forces. Although the reorganization of Hq MACV/7AF into its successor command, Hq USSAG/7AF, in Thailand was not directly ordered by legislation, legal interpretations and constraints increasingly affected military missions and, ultimately, the manner in which regional military headquarters were to be structured. The military aspects of the reorganization are explained in Chapter II; Chapter III looks into another attempt to improve the targeting and tasking of air operations.

(U) As "luck" would have it, the U.S. military forces in Thailand fell heir to an untenable situation when the military government of Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn was overthrown in October 1973. The Thai citizenry, exercising its newly found right of free expression, reacted critically to nearly all arrangements which had been concluded between the previous military regimes and the U.S. Government. Even as the U.S. Embassy and other members of the diplomatic mission in Thailand supported the country's transition to a form of constitutional democracy, they were hampered by the absence of timely changes in foreign policy and the unfortunate identification of U.S. military forces with the previous regimes. Because of the size of its presence in Thailand, the U.S. Air Force was identified, fortuitously, with all that was undesirable and wrong in the past. These events are described in Chapters V and VI.

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(U) The North Vietnamese could not have found a better time to undertake their final offensive. Although U.S. forces were deployed in sufficient numbers to have acquitted themselves as well as during the Spring Offensive of 1972, Presidential authority in 1975 did not presume to initiate counter moves without the concurrence of Congress. The poised forces remained fettered. The lack of a military response by the U.S. Government undercut any remaining credibility in the deterrent effect of the publicized forces in Thailand. With no rationale for a large military presence, U.S. forces moved quickly to withdraw and to comply with the Thai Government's wishes to speed up withdrawal. The closing of Hq USSAG/7AF on 30 June 1975 set the stage for the wholesale withdrawal of U.S. forces from Thailand.



I. LAWS AFFECTING POLICY AND AIR POWER RESPONSIBILITIES IN SEA

BACKGROUND

(U) The pursuit of U.S. foreign policy and the employment of military forces in SE Asia in the period after the peak of U.S. involvement in Vietnam were perceptibly altered by legislation passed by the Congress. Legislators sought to limit, at the beginning, the scope of the conflict and, later, to redress the imbalance of authority over war-making between the Congress and the President. Congress began efforts to restrict the power of the Chief Executive to conduct the war in Indochina after abdicating it to him, as it was felt by many lawmakers, in the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution of 1964.²

(U) Beginning in 1969, the Congress gradually undertook more and more substantive steps to compensate for the inadequacies and excesses it saw in executive policy in Indochina. Initially, the Legislative Branch issued statements of policy it wished the U.S. Government to follow. When the Executive Branch disregarded them, legislation was passed curtailing the use of the armed forces in varying degrees, which in time of active hostilities was precedent-setting. These laws were followed by others which at first restricted and later cut off funds for U.S. military operations, culminating in the termination of funding on 15 August 1973 for all U.S. military forces engaged in combat in SE Asia. At the same time, the debate over these issues provoked the legislators to undertake steps to reassert the constitutional right of the Congress in the "exercise of the power of war."³

(U) The laws designed to limit the scope of hostilities in Indochina by curtailing the use of armed forces were oriented toward preventing U.S. involvement in other land wars in Asia. The first laws were designed to prohibit the entry of U.S. ground combat units and troops into SE Asia where they were not already so deployed. While the strictures on ground combat forces were clear in Southeast Asia, similar restrictions on air forces were not as quick in coming. The lawmakers had recognized this "threshold in warfare" and distinguished between the commitment provided by air power from that conveyed by ground combat units.⁴ This distinction, an important one for the planners reorganizing Hq USMACV into Hq USSAG/7AF, shifted responsibilities heavily to the air forces.

RESTRICTIONS OF CHURCH AND COOPER-CHURCH AMENDMENTS

(U) Heralding the first indications of a changed congressional mood toward U.S. involvement in Indochina was the Church amendment to the Defense Appropriation Act of 1970 [Public Law (PL) 91-171] which

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was introduced on 15 December 1969.⁵ Senator John Sherman Cooper, a Republican from Kentucky, and Senator Frank Church, a Democrat from Idaho, sponsored the measure prohibiting the expenditure of funds to support American ground combat troops in Laos and Thailand, citing precedents established in 1909 and 1940 which curtailed the use of armed forces by Presidents William Howard Taft and Franklin Delano Roosevelt. The amendment (Title VI, General Provisions, Section 643) stated:

In line with the expressed intention of the President of the United States, none of the funds appropriated by this Act shall be used to finance the introduction of armed ground combat troops into Laos or Thailand.

The restrictions of the amendment were clear. Although it was considered to be interim legislation initially, the Church amendment, as it came to be known, was successfully attached to every DOD appropriation act from that date⁶ until the cut-off of all funding for combat activity in SE Asia on 15 August 1975. This amendment was to irritate the sensibilities of, among others, the Thai Minister of Foreign Affairs, Thanat Khoman, who immediately saw it as an erosion of U.S. commitments to Thailand (described on page 10).

(U) Additional restrictions on the deployment of U.S. ground troops in SE Asia were imposed by the congressional response to the Cambodian incursion of 30 April 1970 when President Nixon ordered U.S. and South Vietnamese troops into Cambodia to clean out major enemy sanctuaries and capture the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN).⁷ An amendment to the Special Foreign Assistance Act of 1971 (PL 91-652), popularly called the Cooper-Church amendment, prohibited the introduction of U.S. troops into Cambodia.⁸ Section 7 of the act stipulated:

In line with the expressed intention of the President of the United States, none of the funds authorized or appropriated pursuant to this or any other Act may be used to finance the introduction of United States ground combat troops into Cambodia, or to provide United States advisers to or for Cambodian military forces in Cambodia.

Military and economic assistance provided by the United States to Cambodia and authorized or appropriated pursuant to this or any other Act shall not be construed as a commitment by the United States to Cambodia for its defense.

In contrast to the Church amendment, the Cooper-Church amendment was made binding by the Congress on future legislation, effectively making it a permanent restriction.

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(U) The restrictions of the Cooper-Church amendment were expanded still further by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1971 (PL 92-226) passed on 7 February 1972.⁹ Section 10 of the act amended the Special Foreign Assistance Act of 1971 to prohibit the expenditure of public funds for U.S. advisers "to or for military, paramilitary, police, or other security or intelligence forces in Cambodia." In the minds of the legislators, this amendment was consistent with the intent of the existing prohibition on a direct U.S. ground involvement in the war in Cambodia. They emphasized, "Our Vietnam experience teaches that the first fatal step toward direct involvement comes with the furnishing of United States advisers to the military and related forces of another country."¹⁰ This law was passed, argued the Congressmen, as another step taken to insure that another mistake would not be made in Cambodia.

(U) Since the laws prohibited direct advisory assistance from being provided the Cambodians, the Military Equipment Delivery Team, Cambodia (MEDTC), was extremely circumspect in providing equipment to the Khmer forces after the passage of the legislation, insuring that MEDTC coordination could not be construed as advisory support.¹¹ This placed MEDTC personnel in a position of feeling a compassion for the plight of the Cambodian armed forces after January 1975 as the military situation grew steadily worse, but legally restrained from doing anything about it. As a consequence, the eventual fall of Cambodia to Communist forces on 17 April 1975 evoked a philosophical attitude of inevitability in these members of the U.S. mission.

(U) The Foreign Assistance Act (PL 92-226) also prohibited military assistance to countries in SE Asia which might indirectly involve the United States in ground combat situations. This was a logical extension of the basic purpose of the prohibitions of the act designed to prevent direct ground involvement. Section 513 of the law was a new limitation on funding for military operations.¹² It required specific congressional authorization before funds from any U.S. Government agency or official could be made available,

. . . . for the purpose of financing any military operations by foreign forces in Laos, North Vietnam, or Thailand, outside the borders of the country or the government or person receiving such funds.

In addition, the amendment required the President to make available to the Congress copies of any agreement and other information providing details of such operations. The Congress did not intend, however, to infringe upon or restrict military operations and exercises outside SE Asia.

(U) Additional restrictions were placed on American participation in Cambodia by the adoption in 1971 of Section 66 of the Foreign Assistance Act.¹³ It was the expressed intent of Congress to limit the

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scope of U.S. involvement in Cambodia by restricting the number of American officials who could work there:

The total number of civilian officers and employees of executive agencies of the United States Government who are citizens of the United States and of members of the Armed Forces of the United States (excluding such members while actually engaged in air operations in or over Cambodia which originate outside Cambodia) present in Cambodia at any one time shall not exceed two hundred. The United States shall not, at any time, pay in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, the compensation or allowances of more than 85 individuals in Cambodia who are citizens of countries other than Cambodia or the United States. . . .

The Congressionally-established ceiling of 200 Americans in Cambodia led to the development of unusual personnel accounting procedures by the American Embassy in Phnom Penh* which were maintained until the Communist take-over of the country as well as the development of unique command and control methods for air operations which were used through 15 August 1973.

~~(C GDS 81)~~ On 20 July 1973, while U.S. air support was still being provided Khmer forces, Gen John W. Vogt, Jr., Commander, USSAG/7AF, explained how the Cooper-Church amendment was hampering the effective application of air power.¹⁴ The law prevented the direct solution of a ground commander's problem by a knowledgeable U.S. advisor who could assist him with the most suitable procedure as it was employed in Vietnam and, to a lesser extent, in Laos. General Vogt pointed out that during the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) offensive in South Vietnam in 1972, U.S. advisors assisted Army of Vietnam (ARVN) commanders in properly utilizing air power, instructing them on bombing criteria, clearance distances, proper ordnance, and the most efficient way of calling in strikes. These factors were important in the major battles which resulted in blunting the NVA offensive.

~~(C GDS 81)~~ In a similar manner, when air expertise could be made available to Laotian ground commanders, the results were immediate and significant. The USSAG/7AF commander cited both the successful defense of Long Tieng and the retaking of the Bolovens Plateau prior to the cease fire as examples of directly solving the ground commander's problem. General Vogt emphasized the differences in applying air power in Cambodia:¹⁵

*(U) The Embassy kept a daily total of all U.S. personnel in Cambodia maintaining a tight control on temporary duty personnel in order to stay within the legislated 200-man ceiling. CHECO personnel, for example, could not enter Phnom Penh in early 1975 until an equal number of people departed the country.

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In the case of Cambodia, however, we are prohibited from doing that sort of thing. There are no advisors with them. And, we find that the Cambodian forces make the same mistakes over and over again. Many of them don't understand how air-ground techniques can be properly applied. The simple matter of proper communications when dealing with a FAC is difficult for them to grasp. I cannot straighten that out because I can't go down and give them proper military advice. That would be contrary to the law. What we're trying to do instead is operate entirely from the air since we are prohibited from operating from the ground. That gave rise to the use of ABCCC with their specialized crews right overhead making many of the judgments that are normally done on the ground by the U.S. DASC.

In Vogt's assessment, however, these circumstances gave rise to a more responsive tactical air control system.

IMPACT OF THE CHURCH AMENDMENT ON RELATIONS WITH THAILAND

~~(C-XCDS-3-UNDO)~~ The Thai Government reaction to the Church amendment was prompt and, for a people known for accommodation and the avoidance of discord,* very much to the point. The constitutional issues of the balance in the powers of war-making between the Executive and Legislative Branches of the U.S. Government were less important to the Thai than how they were treated as an ally-in-arms. A lively discussion of the implications of the Church amendment was held between Senator Jacob Javits, a Republican from New York; Dr. Thanat Khoman, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Royal Thai Government (RTG); and Ambassador Leonard Unger on 21 January 1970 in Bangkok, Thailand.¹⁶ Senator Javits, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, explained to the foreign minister that in passing the Church amendment the Senate was asserting, through the use of its appropriation powers, "its right to be consulted about any new military actions the Administration considers necessary to take in Laos and Thailand--beyond those it is already taking." The Senate, according to Javits, had awakened to the realization that the traditional process of declaring war in times past was no longer "an adequate solution for situations which are likely to arise," particularly in SE Asia.

*(U) Characterized by krengchai, the Thai acceptance, according to Khunying Ambhorn Meesook and Nicholas Bennet in their co-authored "Cultures in Collision--An Experience in Thailand," of different people as they are, without actually condoning their values or what they are doing. This characteristic is normally expressed through a desire not to cause offense, "however strong the disagreement." This writer has found that in its everyday practice krengchai is also interlaced with feelings of obligation and enduring hardships.

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~~(C-XGDS-3-UNBO)~~ Javits continued that the Senate was unwilling to give the Executive Branch complete freedom to exercise its judgment in undertaking acts of war, at least in the manner in which the Johnson Administration had interpreted the Tonkin Gulf Resolution. The Thai Minister of Foreign Affairs was assured that the Senate had no intention of limiting U.S. ability "or readiness to fulfill SEATO (or other) commitments." Then, reverting to a "non-rational" explanation* suitable for a discussion in Thailand, Javits observed that the widespread admiration of the Americans for Thai self-help efforts "makes the U.S. ready, according to the Nixon Doctrine, to act in . . . [response to] aggression against Thailand which the Thai forces are unable--after their best efforts--to contain." Such a statement could hardly be considered "logical" when compared to the wording of a law which specifically prohibited the introduction of U.S. ground combat troops into Thailand.

~~(C-XGDS-3-UNBO)~~ Responding, the Foreign Minister pointedly observed that the Church amendment did not specify the "fulfillment of commitments" nor did the phrasing specify that the prohibition against the use of combat troops be reviewed when a threat was posed against Thailand. This was particularly significant from a co-author of the Rusk-Thanat* Communique of 6 March 1962 which reaffirmed the "firm intention of the United States to aid Thailand, its ally and historic friend, in resisting Communist aggression and subversion." In that earlier meeting, Secretary of State Dean Rusk had stressed the importance of the SE Asia Collective Defense Treaty as the means by which assistance would be provided:

The Foreign Minister and the Secretary of State reviewed the close association of Thailand and the United States in the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty and agreed that such association is an effective deterrent to direct Communist aggression against Thailand. They agreed that the treaty provides the basis for the signatories collectively to assist Thailand in case of Communist armed attack against that country. The Secretary of State assured the Foreign Minister that in the event of such aggression, the United States intends to give full effect to its obligations under the treaty to act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional process. The Secretary of State reaffirmed that this obligation of the United States does not depend upon the prior agreement of all other parties to the treaty, since this treaty obligation is individual as well as collective. . . .

* (U) Non-rational reasoning--a cognitive process portrayed conceptually by the Chinese characters, rational (STC 0678/3810), irrational (STC 0008/0678/3810), and non-rational (STC 7236/0678/3810).

* (U) Rusk-Thanat Communique--The arrangement of names is in observance of the Thai custom of using first names, with an honorific, for nearly all purposes of address.

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~~(C XGDS 3 UNDO)~~ Undoubtedly, the agreements of yesteryear bore heavily on Thanat Khoman's mind as he talked with the American officials of a changed administration. The Foreign Minister submitted that it was his considered opinion that the SE Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) was no longer an effective organization because of the lack of support of the American public, the repudiation of contingency plans, and the passage of the Church amendment.¹⁸ He observed, with what can only be described as forbearance under the circumstances, that the great powers were often obliged to "act arbitrarily in the light of global interests that are beyond the ken of small states." The Foreign Minister also criticized Thai military leaders of the Thanom government for a lack of internal consultation when they agreed to U.S. military deployments. He repeated his longstanding criticism that U.S. deployments in Thailand "took place at U.S., not Thai initiatives." At the same time, he admitted that the deployments were in the common interest of the allies.

~~(C XGDS 3 UNDO)~~ Senator Javits reminded Dr. Thanat Khoman that the U.S. sacrifice in lives and money was an indication of a pledge of U.S. purpose in SE Asia and urged him to read the full transcript of the hearings on the Church amendment in order to determine for himself the intent of the law. Javits requested Unger to transmit the Foreign Minister's comments on the law so that he could deliver them to the Foreign Relations Committee. In order to allay the minister's resentment over the citing of Thailand in the amendment, Javits explained that the Senate was not evaluating U.S.-Thai relations since SEATO commitments and the strategy for defending against aggression were not under consideration. He assured Thanat that what was really under discussion was the manner in which a decision on warmaking "would be arrived at within the U.S. Government."¹⁹ Although the American Embassy (AmEmb) in Bangkok appeared to have assessed the meeting as having been productive, the Foreign Minister had apparently concluded that the evidence was on the side of a regression in relations. Thanat's perceptions were to return to nettle the AmEmb Bangkok in 1974.

IMPACT OF THE CHURCH AMENDMENT ON MILITARY OPERATIONS

(U) Secretary of State William P. Rogers summarized the effects the Church amendment would have on the conduct of foreign relations and on U.S. military operations in SE Asia in a message to the AmEmb Bangkok on 24 March 1970.²⁰ Rogers interpreted the law's impact on U.S. forces in Thailand, air operations being conducted at the time in Laos, bilateral and multilateral military actions, and future military exercises.

(U) The Church amendment was not seen as limiting the use of funds for the maintenance of U.S. Forces in Thailand, "including the rotation of personnel, notwithstanding the fact that some of these forces are

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capable of ground combat." The Secretary explained that this interpretation was clarified by Senator Church himself when he strongly emphasized that "ground combat troops" were to be affected, adding:²¹

We are simply not undertaking to make any changes in the status quo. The limiting language is precise and it does not undertake to repeal the past or roll back the present. It looks to the future.

~~(S GDS 82)~~ Though the intent of the amendment was to prevent the introduction of combat units into either Laos or Thailand without disturbing the existing deployment of troops and, thereby, limit the scope of the war in Indochina, the AmEmb in Bangkok found, over the next several years, continued evidence that other members of the Thai Government began to share Dr. Thanat Khoman's early observation of the U.S. law.²² By the middle of 1974, the Embassy advised the members of the U.S. Mission in Thailand that the RTG viewed the Church amendment as having impaired U.S. commitments to the kingdom.

(U) Secretary Rogers, in the earlier communication, stressed that the Church amendment had no effect on current U.S. air operations anywhere in Laos.²³ Although early debate in Congress on the Cooper amendment had left an uncertainty over "what effect that amendment would have had on U.S. air support for the Laotian Army in north Laos," no senator had suggested that the Church amendment was to apply to air operations in Laos. Rogers emphasized that the language of the amendment prevented any such interpretation.

(U) Although the Department of State viewed the Church amendment as restricting bilateral and multilateral military actions at the time, it was not interpreted as totally incapacitating executive action if the need arose to introduce combat units into Laos or Thailand. In his willingness to test the constitutionality of the amendment, Secretary Rogers explained:²⁴

During the Senate debate no question was raised as to the constitutionality of this legislation, specifically its effect on the authority of the President as Chief Executive and Commander-in-Chief. Should a situation arise in which the introduction of U.S. ground troops into combat in Laos and Thailand during FY70 had to be considered, the President might consider whether there were other appropriated funds available, whether to challenge the constitutionality of the legislation or whether to return to Congress for legislation that would either eliminate the restriction of the Church Amendment or else provide a special appropriation.

This reasoning was consistent with the Administration's later arguments against the Cooper-Church amendment in which it was charged that Congress

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was "infringing the President's powers as commander in chief to defend American forces in the field."²⁵ Secretary Rogers reminded all concerned that even under the existing legislation, the President was free to take such measures as would be required in defending U.S. military personnel already in Thailand or Laos.²⁶ Interestingly, even the Senate felt, at the time, that military action would be valid for protecting military personnel, but expected that such action would be of short duration and would not involve continuing military engagement.

(U) The Church amendment did not prohibit, advised Rogers, the use of DOD funds for mobility exercises, "even for those that may involve the landing of U.S. ground combat troops in Thailand." The important point to remember was the intent of the amendment to insure that congressional approval was obtained before U.S. ground forces were sent into combat in Thailand or Laos. The Secretary concluded that the law was not designed to deprive the President of the option of conducting mobility exercises which might include U.S. ground combat troops; the power to conduct exercises carried with it the implied right to use appropriate troops. Practically speaking, however, Rogers realized that the passage of the amendment itself was an indication that political opposition would develop if such exercises were carried out.

JUSTIFICATION READIED FOR RESUMING AIR WAR IN 1973

(U) In the period immediately following the signing of the Paris Agreement on 27 January 1973, thought was given, in various quarters, to the legality of resuming the air war in SE Asia if the situation required. It should be remembered, however, that since a cease fire had not been concluded in Cambodia, U.S. air operations were resumed after a brief respite. In February 1973, the legal staff in the AmEmb Bangkok reviewed legislation which they interpreted to be relevant to the employment of air power in SE Asia.²⁷ These included the Defense Appropriation Act of 1973 (PL 92-570, Sec 737), the Foreign Assistance Act of 1971 (PL 92-226, Sec 408, 409), and the Military Procurement Act of 1973 (PL 92-436, Sec 602).

(U) From their analysis of these laws, the counsels reasoned that the important consideration restricting operations was the portion of the law which stated, "Nothing. . . shall be construed as authorizing the use of any such funds to support Vietnamese or other free world forces in actions designed to provide military support and assistance to the Government of Cambodia or Laos." It appeared to the Embassy that combat air operations in Cambodia and Laos had been justified in the past on the basis of assisting the Vietnamese. With the cease-fire in Vietnam, however, that justification was no longer valid and Department of Defense (DOD) funds could not be made available to provide support of the Governments of Cambodia and Laos.

(U) The legal staff pointed out, however, that the last paragraph of the statutes stated the law should not be construed to prohibit actions required to insure (1) the safe and orderly withdrawal of U.S. forces from SE Asia and (2) the release of Americans held as prisoners of war. As a result, it was proposed that an argument be advanced that "so long as POWs are held in SE Asia and so long as the USG is withdrawing forces," combat air actions could be legally employed in Laos and Cambodia.

(U) In addition, the existing laws specified, explained the legal brief, that when the POWs were released and when the United States had substantially disengaged and withdrawn its forces from SE Asia, "then DOD appropriations could not be used to conduct combat air operations in Laos and Cambodia" during FY73. On the other hand, there was no legislative restriction on "resuming the Air War in Vietnam after the release of all American POWs and after substantially all American forces have been disengaged from SE Asia." Apparently, this line of reasoning was based on the opinion that the Paris Agreement did not create substantive restraints under U.S. domestic law as would acts of Congress.

(U) The legal staff in the AmEmb Bangkok concluded:²⁸

- There was no legislative prohibition in February 1973 against resuming U.S. air operations in Vietnam from Thailand or elsewhere.

- Combat air operations in Laos and/or Cambodia were not prohibited by legislation, so long as two factors were present: (a) Operations were authorized that ensured the "safe and orderly withdrawal or disengagement of U.S. forces from SE Asia." (b) Operations were authorized that aided in the release of Americans held as prisoners of war.

- Combat air operations in Laos and Cambodia could be undertaken if the U.S. Government resumed its military role in Vietnam and resumed combat operations.

(U) The justification for the continuation of combat air operations in Cambodia in the months following the signing of the Paris Agreement, however, was replete with constitutional issues. In a cogent memorandum to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 30 April 1973, Secretary Rogers explained the legal authority provided the President for continuing U.S. air operations into Cambodia since the signing of the agreement and the completion of the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Vietnam and the return of U.S. POWs by 29 March 1973.²⁹

(U) Basically, the renewed bombing was authorized by the Executive Branch because communist forces continued to violate Article 20 of the Paris Agreement and continued to show no indication that they were taking action to bring about a cease-fire in Cambodia. The Secretary also responded to the congressional interpretation that the withdrawal of U.S. forces from South Vietnam and the return of the prisoners had created a fundamentally new situation in which new authority had to be acquired by the President from the Congress to conduct air strikes in Cambodia. Rogers pointed out:³⁰

The issue more accurately stated is whether the constitutional authority of the President to continue doing in Cambodia what the United States has lawfully been doing there expires with the withdrawal of U.S. armed forces from Viet-Nam and the return of American prisoners, despite the fact that a cease-fire has not been achieved in Cambodia contrary to the clear provisions of the Agreement.

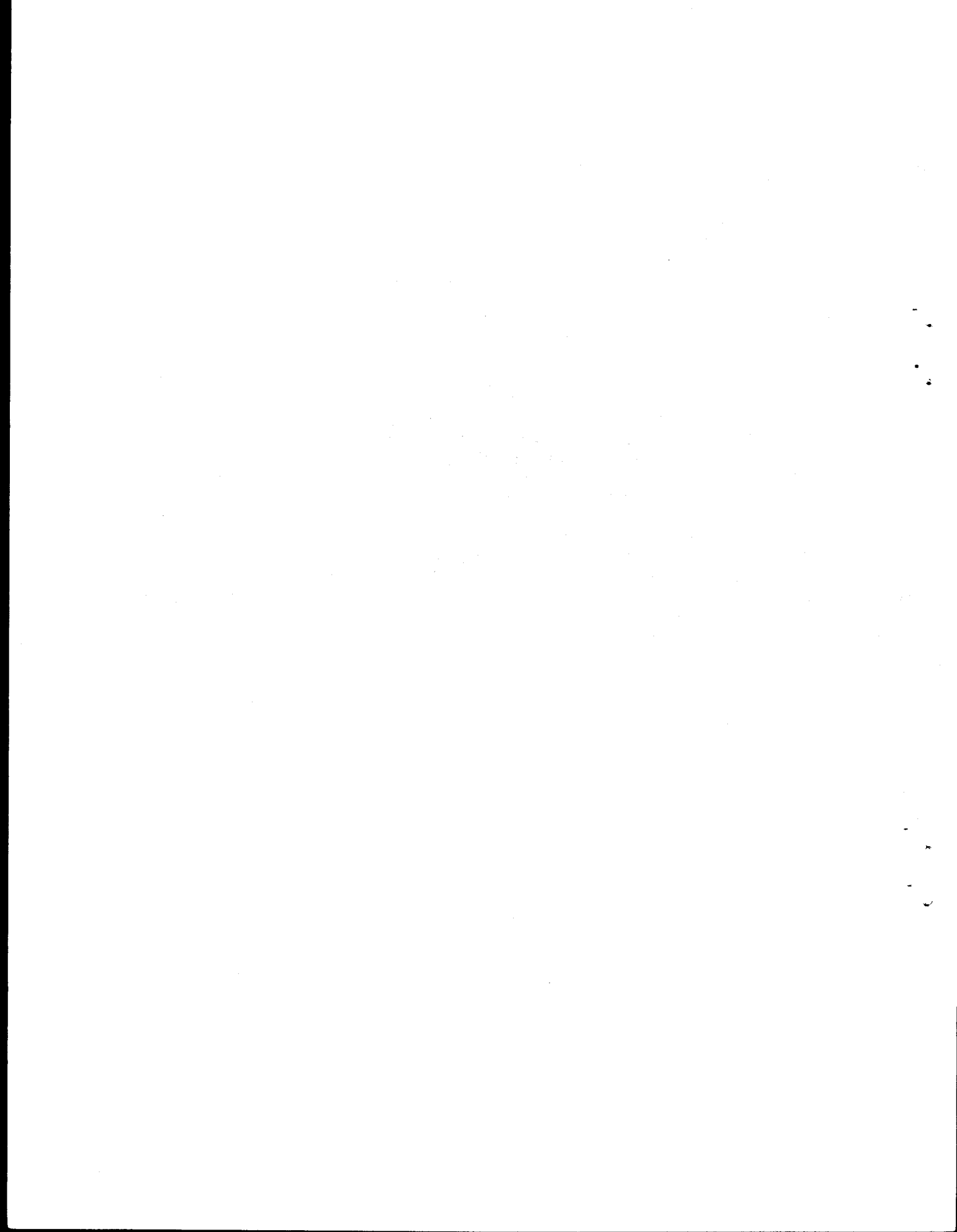
The Secretary of State argued that obviously it had not.

(U) Rogers cited a recent decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit (Mitchell v Laird) in which it was made clear that the President had the constitutional power to pursue these military and political purposes. Bearing in mind the legal restrictions placed on increasing national commitments to other countries, the Secretary explained that the U.S. air strikes in Cambodia did not represent a commitment by the United States to the defense of Cambodia but were a means by which compliance could be brought about with the Paris Agreement. He was mindful of the ambiguities of the division of power between the President and the Congress over the use of armed forces abroad. On the other hand, the President's policy in Cambodia was fully consistent with the authorization and appropriation process, particularly with respect to the changes enacted by Congress with specific references to Cambodia.

(U) With the viability of the settlement in Vietnam at stake and the preservation of the right to self-determination of the South Vietnamese in danger, the Secretary of State stoutly defended U.S. objectives in Cambodia:³¹

. . . unilateral cessation of our United States air combat activity in Cambodia without the removal of North Vietnamese forces from that country would undermine the central achievement of the January Agreement as surely as would have a failure by the United States to insist on the inclusion in the Agreement of Article 20 requiring North Vietnamese withdrawal from Laos and Cambodia. The President's powers under Article II of the Constitution are adequate to prevent such a self-defeating result.

The majority in Congress, however, did not agree. Many Congressmen, among them Senator Thomas F. Eagleton, felt that the methods used in the enforcement of the Paris Agreement, even if it could be agreed that it was good policy, did not meet the criterion of constitutionality.³²



II. REORGANIZATION OF USMACV AND ESTABLISHMENT OF USSAG/7AF

INCORPORATION OF 7AF INTO HQ MACV

(U) The transplanting of important staff components of Headquarters Seventh Air Force (Hq 7AF) into Hq MACV on 15 May 1972* continued a series of structural modifications in the U.S. command organization in Vietnam as the incremental troop withdrawals from Vietnam continued. On the surface, the consolidation appeared to be the beginning of a closer, even symbiotic, relationship between the U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force in the command structure. In actuality, however, the restructuring did not result in a major shift in command and control, which remained a U.S. Army domain, but did provide USAF with more and important positions in MACV's structure. At the same time, it was de facto acknowledgement of a larger role for air power in the sub-unified command which remained in SE Asia.

~~(C ODS-82)~~ In September 1971, Hq MACV had instructed Hq 7AF to begin identifying "non-mission essential functions" for consolidation, elimination, or transfer to other headquarters to reduce the size of the headquarters.³³ While Hq 7AF was in the midst of reducing functions and personnel, Hq MACV issued new orders in January 1972 to plan for combining Hq MACV and Hq 7AF.³⁴ As a result, a plan was developed by a working group which scheduled the relocation of 7AF's staff agencies to Hq MACV on 1 May 1972. Before these events could transpire, however, the NVA launched its Easter Offensive and the staff actions required to counteract this major offensive served to delay the completion of consolidation until June 1972.

~~(C ODS-82)~~ During the transition, a number of issues arose centering about dual hat positions and the differentiation of functional responsibilities between Hq MACV and Hq 7AF. Initially, only the position of COM7AF/DEPCOMUSMACV was to be dual-hatted as a means of insuring the retention by 7AF of the control of the air war. All other positions involved in the merger were to appear only on the joint table of distribution (JTD).^{*} The necessity for dual-hatting other positions, however, became immediately apparent.³⁵

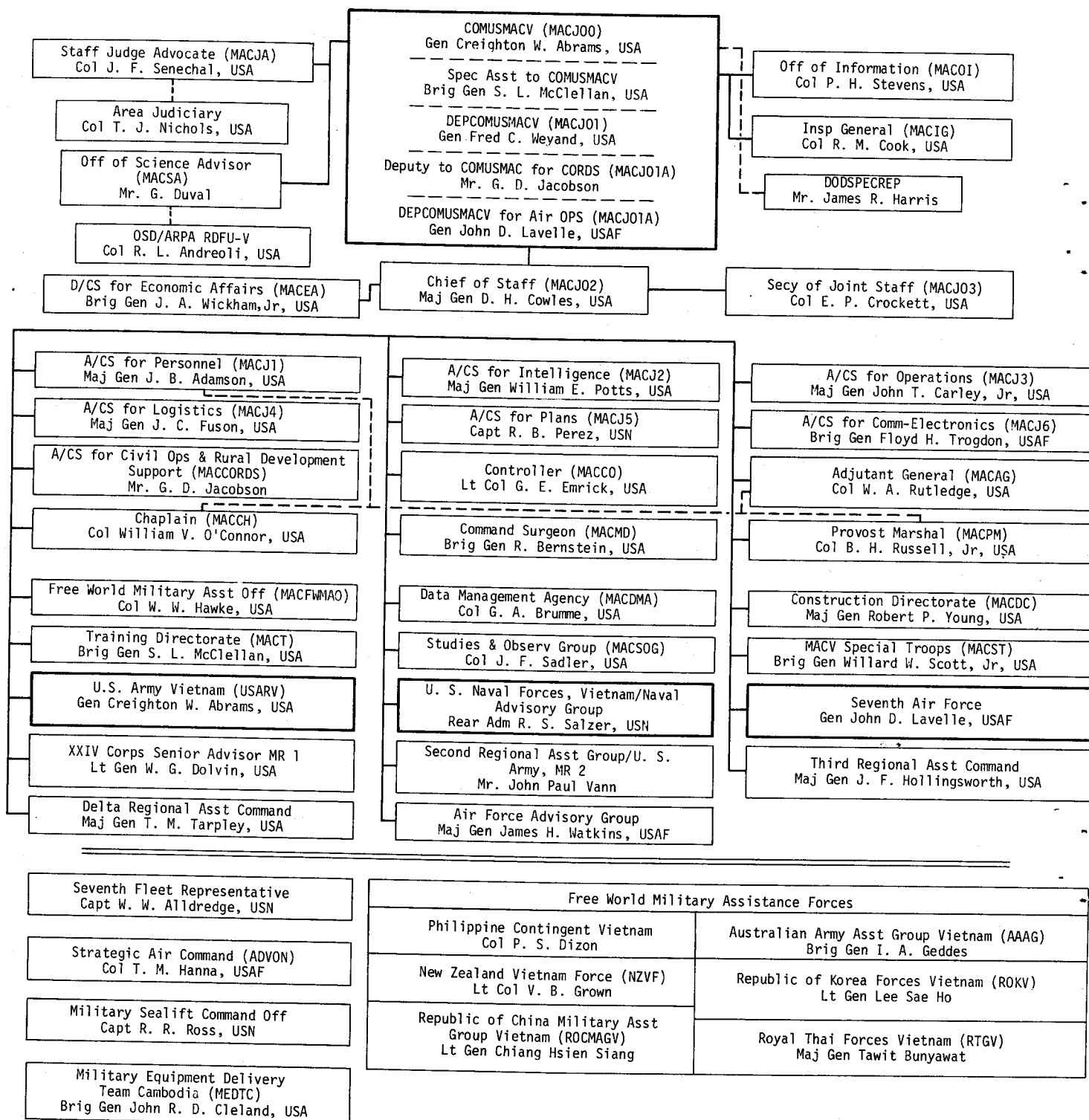
^{*}(U) The consolidation of the operations and intelligence staffs of Hq 7AF into Hq MACV was promulgated by MACV Directive 10-21 which preceded COMUSMACV OPlan J-124 by more than a month. The physical relocation was not considered complete until the end of Jun 72.

^{*}(U) JTD--A manpower document which identifies the positions and enumerates the spaces that have been approved for each organizational element of a joint activity for a specific fiscal year and those spaces which have been accepted for planning and programming purposes for the four subsequent fiscal years.

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Fig 1

**ORGANIZATION OF U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE COMMAND, VIETNAM
MARCH-APRIL 1972**



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Source: Hq USMACV, Office of the Adjutant General.

~~(C GDS-82)~~ Hq 7AF planners pointed out that the responsibilities of 7AF/DO and 7AF/IN remained in spite of the fact that the personnel who were required to perform the functions had been transferred to Hq MACV. When the JTD was being coordinated in June 1972, after about 350 personnel from 7AF had been transferred, attempts were made to dual-hat 150 positions as 7AF/MACV. Although the proposal was disapproved by COMUSMACV, he compromised after command discussions to allow 20 dual-hat positions, the Commander, 7AF; the Director of Operations with 11 staff personnel; and the Director of Intelligence with a staff of six. By the end of June 1972, the command and control of the air war transferred from Blue Chip* in the 7AF compound to the new Blue Chip in the Hq MACV compound.³⁶

(U) On 29 June 1972, Gen John W. Vogt, Jr., Commander, 7AF, became the DEPCOMUSMACV, the first time that a USAF officer had assumed the position. The position of DEPCOMUSMACV for Air Operations, the highest position in the MACV held by USAF until then, was subsumed with DEPCOMUSMACV.³⁷ General Vogt occupied that position until the disestablishment of Hq MACV on 29 March 1973.

~~(C GDS-81)~~ This integration of headquarters functions, coming as it did in the midst of the North Vietnamese offensive, created unusual demands on the staff of 7AF. General Vogt reviewed the events:³⁸

This had already been agreed to as a part of the Vietnamization Program--that we would move over and at a certain point in time I would assume the additional duties of the Deputy MACV. Well, this in itself was an anomaly. Here, in the middle of the most intensive combat we've had, we dual-hat people and compel them to do a couple of jobs. But once again I think there was a certain measure of effectiveness in having the two headquarters together that compensated for this. We missed that extra four-star general--there's no question about it--because I had to pick up duties which the Seventh Air Force commander before had not been required to do, for example, to hold tripartite meetings with the Cambodians and the South Vietnamese, which had previously been the function of the Deputy Commander. I had to carry it on with extensive visits to the corps commanders in the role of Deputy MACV, solving not only air problems but ground problems.

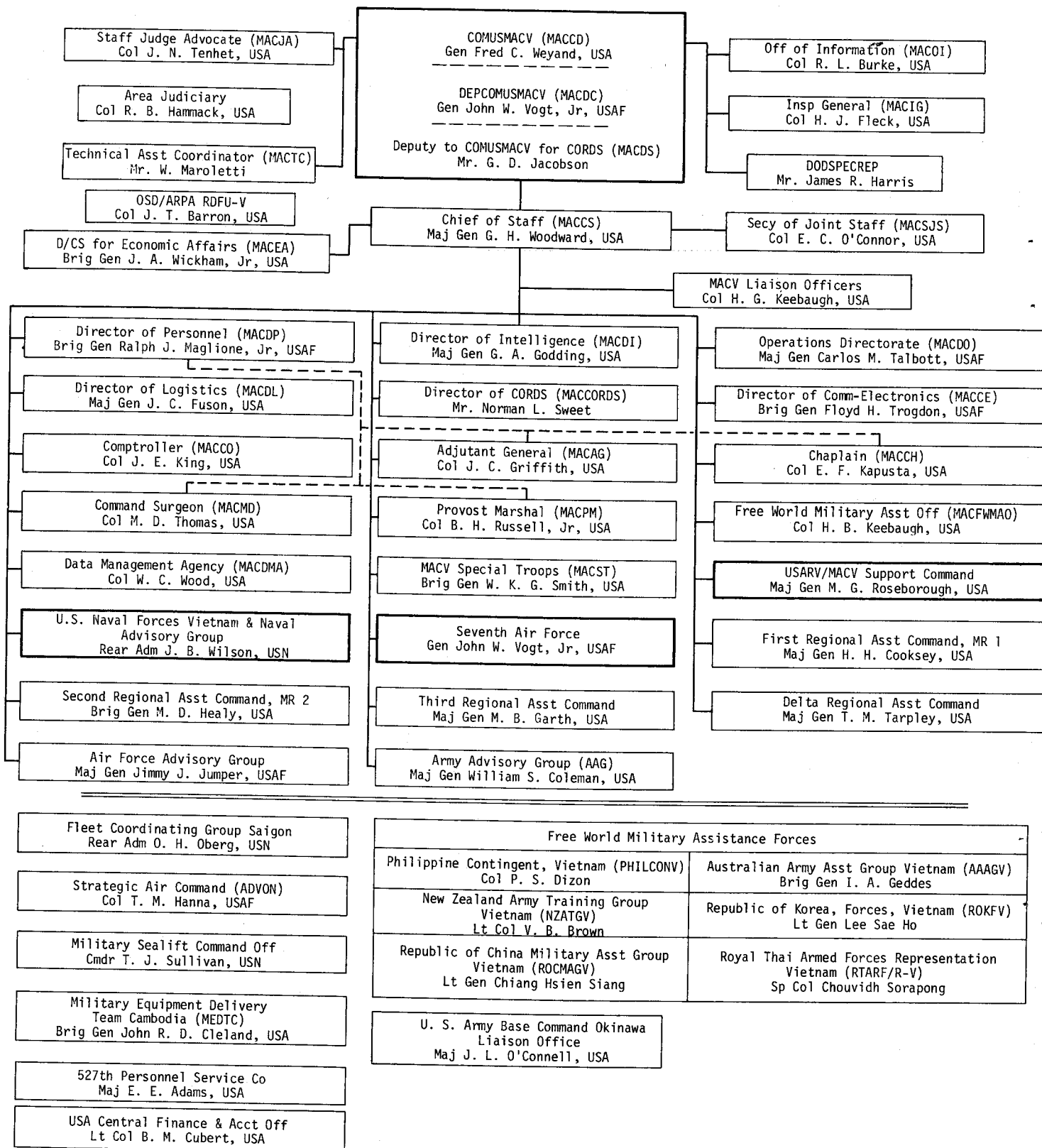
The consolidation of responsibilities and assumption of new duties were not accompanied by simpler tasking or reduced operational requirements.

*(U) Blue Chip--The 7AF Tactical Air Control Center.

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**ORGANIZATION OF
U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE COMMAND VIETNAM/SEVENTH AIR FORCE
DECEMBER 1972-JANUARY 1973**

Fig 2



UNCLASSIFIED

Source: Hq USMACV, Office of the Adjutant General.

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~~(S-NF-XGDS-3-02)~~ General Vogt was not alone in evaluating the increase in tasks for 7AF. The Vice Commander, 7AF, Maj Gen Winton W. Marshall, described the impact of the consolidation on 7AF staff personnel:³⁹

We had Air Force colonels in operations who were already putting in long hours in their duties in connection with the air war and when they took over their responsibilities at MACV, they replaced, in many cases, an Army colonel who also had the responsibilities for reporting tank operations and ARVN training in anti-tank weapons. In other words, many responsibilities of ground operations were assumed by Air Force colonels. As a result, our Seventh Air Force people who merged with MACV took on a tremendously increased [workload].

~~(C-GDS-81)~~ It should also be remembered that the seemingly contradictory objectives of fighting at an increased level and reducing U.S. forces and bases in Vietnam were pursued at the same time. General Vogt described the situation in these terms:⁴⁰

This is a situation that wasn't too well recognized in Washington. The decision had been made to go on with the Vietnamization program and the program for the withdrawal was pretty well nailed in advance in Washington. While this program was underway, the enemy came in with a new invasion. Nobody made an effort, however, to reverse the Vietnamization program. They couldn't very well do it politically. So we had to continue with the drawdowns, including drawdowns in the headquarters engaged in the fight.

It is clear that 7AF was concerned primarily with the task at hand, of confronting and defeating the enemy offensive. Although Vietnamization had made substantial progress, the U.S. military leaders in Vietnam realized that South Vietnamese forces alone would "not be able to do the job without very substantial USAF air" and U.S. Navy forces which were also employed.⁴¹ The niceties of organizational structuring and properly authorizing new functions came after the integration of 7AF elements.

(U) After June 1972, Hq 7AF was located at two separate sites, at Tan Son Nhut AB in the 7AF compound and at the Hq MACV compound across from the Saigon International Airport terminal. This split arrangement continued until 29 March 1973, when the remaining elements of Hq 7AF drew down at Tan Son Nhut after Hq USSAG/7AF had been activated at Nakhon Phanom (NKP) in Thailand. The combined Hq MACV, a unique staff arrangement, continued to make adjustments. Although major elements of Hq 7AF had become integrated in June 1972, it was not until about November 1972 that references to the headquarters as "Hq MACV/7AF" begin.⁴²

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(U) During this period, the Vietnamization program was announced by Washington as having been successful enough for the termination of the U.S. ground combat role in Vietnam which ushered in, indirectly, a new role for U.S. air power. President Nixon declared that, for official purposes, the U.S. ground combat role was concluded on 30 June 1972.⁴³ Since the introduction of ground combat units into Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand had been prohibited by legislation described in the preceding chapter, U.S. ground combat responsibilities were essentially terminated in all of Indochina on 30 June 1972. As a result, any remaining responsibility for combat operations in Indochina fell to the lot of USAF and Marine units remaining in Vietnam and deployed in Thailand.* Clearly, U.S. policy commitments to South Vietnam were reduced, but USAF responsibilities for providing measured force were continued and, in a sense, enlarged.

THE CEASE-FIRE TRANSITION: FROM MACV/7AF TO USSAG/7AF

~~(C GDS 82)~~ "Cease-fire planning for Southeast Asia" was the phraseology used for planning drawn up in joint channels for supporting the implementation of the anticipated cease-fire in Vietnam. It began on 27 October 1972, the day following Dr. Henry A. Kissinger's dramatic "peace is at hand" press conference at the White House. The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) ordered CINCPAC to initiate planning with subordinate commands to redeploy all U.S. and Free World Military Forces (FWMF) from the RVN within a 60-day period, to continue U.S. combat operations in support of the Royal Laotian Government and the Khmer Republic, to maintain the capability for 4,700 sorties a month (with a surge to 6,700 a month) by Thailand-based forces, and to establish an operationally-ready U.S. Defense Attache Office (USDAO) in Saigon by X plus 60 days.⁴⁴ These planning instructions were quickly sent to Hq MACV/7AF and the component commands.

~~(C GDS 82)~~ By 1 November 1972, Hq MACV/7AF provided CINCPAC with its proposal for a "Southeast Asia Support Command" in Thailand which would succeed the Saigon headquarters.⁴⁵ The plan for the follow-on headquarters was developed by the Operations Directorate of Hq MACV/7AF, in a close-hold atmosphere, with key decision-making responsibilities in the hands of U.S. Army planners.⁴⁶ Since CINCPAC had tasked component commands in addition to Hq MACV/7AF, he received other redeployment recommendations which were consolidated into a three-option planning proposal to the JCS on 4 November 1972.

~~(C GDS 82)~~ For its part, Hq PACAF recommended, on 31 October, that command and control of all forces "be vested in a joint command under CINCPAC which would have responsibility for targeting and tasking for all

* (U) Similar responsibilities remained with offshore U.S. Navy carrier forces.

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participating air resources."⁴⁷ Under such an arrangement, the organization would be commanded by a USAF O-10 and a U.S. Army O-9 deputy in a reversal of the existing positions at Hq MACV/7AF. PACAF recommended that the command be relocated to NKP into facilities vacated by Task Force Alpha,* with austere staffing made up by transferring MACV/7AF personnel. In the event a decision was made by the JCS not to vest targeting and tasking responsibility for all forces in a joint command or if no joint forces were to be in the command, Gen Lucius D. Clay, Jr., Commander in Chief, PACAF (CINCPACAF), would establish Hq 7AF at NKP. In such a case, the command line would be from CINCPAC through CINCPACAF to 7AF.

~~(C GDS 82)~~ In its response, PACAF provided a Thailand force structure which would provide 4,700 strike sorties a month with a surge capability to 6,700 sorties and would provide appropriate reconnaissance, gunship, forward air controller (FAC), electronic countermeasure (ECM), early warning, and support aircraft.⁴⁸ Such a force was estimated to include 162 F-4s, 48 F-111s, 24 A-7s, 8 AC-130s, 7 HC-130s, 12 F-105Gs, 18 RF-4Cs, 71 OV-10s, 17 to 22 EC-47s, 13 EB-66s, 7 EC-121s, 6 CH-53s, and 11 HH-53s based at Udorn, Ubon, NKP, Korat, and Takhli Royal Thai Air Force Bases.

~~(C GDS 82)~~ On 4 November 1972, CINCPAC submitted his planning proposal to the JCS.⁴⁹ It included three options: (1) a subordinate unified command, called U.S. Southeast Asia Command (SEAC), to conduct SE Asia land-based air and logistics operations; (2) a limited SE Asia sub-unified command, called SE Asia Support Command (SEASC), with a more restricted scope of responsibilities than SEAC; and (3) a USAF unilateral command. Adm Noel A. M. Gayler, CINCPAC, informed Gen Fred C. Weyand, COMUSMACV, on 18 November, that JCS planning, then awaiting the Secretary of Defense's approval, recommended that the headquarters in Thailand be a "multi-service headquarters," to be called "U.S. Support Activities Group/7th Air Force," which would be located at NKP. On 21 November, the JCS authorized CINCPAC to establish USSAG/7AF ADVON at NKP prior to cease-fire day (X-day) provided that diplomatic clearance was received to do so.⁵⁰ At the same time, authority was provided to disestablish Hq MACV/7AF between X-day and X plus 60 and to fully establish USSAG/7AF at NKP during the same period. The manner in which the diplomatic clearance was secured by the AmEmb Bangkok from the Thai Government was notable for its expediency, the details of which are described in the following pages.

MACV PROPOSALS TO CINCPAC ON USSAG/7AF

~~(C GDS 82)~~ On 26 November 1972, Hq MACV/7AF recommended to CINCPAC what it thought the mission and function of Hq USSAG/7AF should be upon

* (U) Task Force Alpha--The Air Force unit responsible for the infiltration Surveillance center at NKP Royal Thai AFB.

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its activation at NKP. The mission of the new headquarters--the outline of which remained essentially unchanged through 1974--was:

- To plan for the resumption of an effective air campaign in Laos, Cambodia, RVN, and North Vietnam in the event the provisions of the cease-fire were violated;

- To establish and maintain a command and control structure for the management of air elements under its operational control, including a capability for interfacing with the VNAF air control system;

- To establish and maintain liaison with the RVNAF Joint General Staff (JGS), Commander Task Force (CTF) 77, and committed SAC forces.

~~(C GDS 82)~~ In order to pursue its mission, Hq USSAG/7AF was to prepare and develop plans for the resumption of combat air operations in its areas of responsibility on short notice, to maintain the intelligence and target data necessary for supporting the resumption of such a campaign, to assume operational control of Thailand-based USAF tactical air resources upon the resumption of combat operations, to retain the "capability to maintain liaison with" the RVNAF JGS, and, in coordination with the JGS, pursue contingency planning for the possible reentry into RVN with appropriate air control assets, and to be sufficiently staffed and structured to provide effective control of the Defense Resource Support and Termination Office (DRSTO) in the RVN.⁵²

~~(C GDS 82)~~ In its early planning, Hq MACV/7AF intended to retain Hq 7AF as a separate entity, apart from USSAG/7AF with 7AF positions dual-hatted to USSAG/7AF.⁵³ This structuring would have retained the essential features of Hq MACV/7AF, as reorganized in June 1972, with the service billets of the commander and deputy reversed. While there were these similarities, it should be noted that the JCS referred to USSAG/7AF as a "multi-service integrated headquarters" in contrast to the title of MACV/7AF as "sub-unified command headquarters." The two reasons given for this distinction by planners were that USSAG/7AF was to be a temporary headquarters and that it was to have included Khmer and possibly other friendly government representatives, justifications which were not supported by the passage of events.

~~(C GDS 82)~~ MACV/7AF planners designed Hq USSAG/7AF to be an "austere organization" using the elements and personnel of the Saigon headquarters in the new command at NKP.⁵⁴ USSAG was to have a standard J-staff* with a USAF general officer dual-hatted as both the commander of

**(U) J-staff--In its strictest sense, the joint staff is the "staff of a commander of a unified or specified command, or of a joint task force, which includes members from the several services comprising the force. These members should be assigned in such a manner as to insure that the commander understands the tactics, techniques, capabilities, needs, and limitations of the component parts of the force. Positions on the staff should be divided so that service representation and influence generally reflect the service composition of the force."*

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USSAG/7AF and 7AF itself. The USSAG deputy commander was to be an Army O-8; the deputy commander 7/13AF to become, concurrently, deputy commander 7AF; the J-1, an Army O-6; the J-2, a USAF O-8; the J-3, a USAF O-8; the J-4, an Army O-7; and the J-6, a USAF O-6. The J-2, J-3, and J-6 were to be dual-hatted USSAG-7AF positions. In late November 1972, the planners estimated the JTD for USSAG would include 560 military and one civilian spaces. MACV/7AF planners specifically identified Hq 7AF as a separate headquarters with an authorized manning of 48 spaces. The latter organization became significantly altered.

~~(C GDS 82)~~ In a continuation of command relationships in which major operational elements in SE Asia remained outside the control of Hq MACV, being placed in a status of "close coordination" by the JCS, planners projected the same elements in a similar arrangement at Hq USSAG/7AF. MACV/7AF specified that SAC ADVON, Fleet Coordinating Group, Joint Casualty Resolution Center (JCRC), and intelligence detachments would be required in addition to the spaces in the USSAG JTD. The planners recognized that these elements were essential to the mission objectives of USSAG, but cautioned that JCS authorization was required for their assignment to USSAG/7AF.⁵⁵

~~(C GDS 82)~~ During late November and early December 1972, while the Paris negotiations on a cease-fire in Vietnam were stalemated, the discussions on the withdrawal of forces and the establishment of USSAG/7AF continued unabated. The improbability of quickly concluding a firm cease-fire with the North Vietnamese cast a shadow of doubt over the timing of actions by MACV/7AF for establishing USSAG/7AF and for its own disestablishment.⁵⁶ By 4 December 1972, however, it was anticipated that MACV/7AF's functions would be redeployed in accordance with the provisions of COMUSMACV OPlan J215.

~~(C GDS 82)~~ The transfer of MACV's responsibilities to follow-on organizations was to proceed in five steps, none of which could be scheduled precisely because of the diplomatic uncertainties. These steps were:⁵⁷

- The redeployment to begin on the effective date of cease-fire day (X-day).
- Simultaneously with the functional establishment of USSAG/7AF, MACV to release control of those missions and functions to USSAG, continuing its redeployment from the RVN.
- MACV to complete the redeployment of its main body no later than X plus 45.
- COMUSMACV to depart RVN after X plus 45.
- Hq MACV/7AF to be formally inactivated by CINCPAC between X plus 45 and X plus 60 when MACV completed its redeployment.

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As anticipated, the timing of these events was altered by the uncooperativeness of the North Vietnamese in Paris.

~~(C GDS 02)~~ The revised proposal for USSAG, submitted by MACV/7AF on 4 December 1972, contained the following JTD distribution:⁵⁸

SPACES BY STAFF ELEMENT

	<u>Army</u>	<u>Navy</u>	<u>USAF</u>	<u>USMC</u>	<u>Total</u>
Comd Gp	9	1	16	0	26
J-1	7	1	23	0	31
J-2	16	8	134	0	158
J-3	34	4	252	3	293
J-4	14	2	14	0	30
J-6	3	1	7	0	11
Hq Comdt	1	1	6	0	9
Total*	84	18	452	3	557
Per cent service mix	15	3	81	1	100

Six additional U.S. civilian spaces were included in the proposed JTD, bringing the total to 563. The planners in SE Asia had also allocated an additional 49 military spaces and 3 civilian spaces for the colocated Hq 7AF.

~~(C GDS 02)~~ The terms of reference for USSAG/7AF which MACV proposed to CINCPAC on 4 December contained the highlights of the mission and functions outlined in the 27 November message to CINCPAC. The differences rested chiefly in the clarification of CINCPAC's command and control over USSAG/7AF in such matters as when combat air operations would be reinstituted, when tactical air resources would be committed to COMUSSAG for combat air operations, as well as normal command relations. The MACV/7AF proposed terms of reference clearly stipulated that COMUSSAG/7AF was "the commander of a multi-service integrated headquarters."

~~(C GDS 02)~~ The command arrangements which MACV/7AF designed for USSAG/7AF, based on assumptions of Communist cooperativeness in cease-fires, were oriented toward separating the new command from military organizations already existing in Thailand. The plans specified that COMUSMACTHAI would remain CINCPAC's "single military representative in Thailand" while COMUSSAG/7AF would coordinate on matters of mutual interest. Commander, 13AF, continued to command assigned USAF assets in Thailand, except SAC units. On the other hand, the Deputy Commander, 7/13AF was to act as Deputy Commander, 7AF in order to provide the interface between the 7AF and 13AF missions and "to provide a command representative to the U.S. Mission in Thailand." The DRSTO, later renamed Defense Attache Office (DAO), was to coordinate RVN operational requirements for USSAG/7AF. In

~~(C GDS 02)~~ The totals in the COMUSMACV message were different: 87, 20, 455, and 3 for a grand total of 565. They appeared to be arithmetic errors.

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anticipation of a steadily stabilizing situation in SE Asia, planners even incorporated measures for disestablishing USSAG/7AF as they outlined how the headquarters was to be established. Since Communist forces in Indochina were expected to cooperate, USSAG/7AF would be short-lived. The follow-on organization was to be an air division which would command all USAF units in Thailand; CINCPAC would assume operational command of DAO; and component commands were to take over service logistics needs.⁶⁰

CINCPAC EXPANDS PLANS AND GAINS JCS APPROVAL

~~(C GDS-82)~~ CINCPAC generally concurred with MACV/7AF's recommendations for USSAG/7AF's responsibilities, but found the submission to be an opportunity for further expansion and clarification.⁶¹ The consolidated recommendations were sent to the JCS on 8 December 1972. Specifically clarified were the relationships between USSAG/7AF and the AmEmb in Bangkok. To wit, CINCPAC specified that COMUSSAG/7AF deal directly with the Chief, U.S. Diplomatic Mission, on matters of mutual interest. COMUSSAG/7AF was to respond to the direction of the Ambassador in contacting Royal Thai Government officials and to keep both the Ambassador and CINCPAC fully informed. These responsibilities were, in turn, modified by the JCS in their approval message of 10 January 1973.⁶²

~~(C GDS-82)~~ The JCS approved the main points of CINCPAC's recommendations, but clearly reserved those prerogatives they judged were theirs alone and clarified those granted CINCPAC. Specifically, any examination and changes of the command structure in Thailand after X plus 60 were to be pursued by the JCS and not by self-generated initiatives from USSAG/7AF, upward in the chain of command. The feature of the MACV/7AF plan, originated in SE Asia, providing for the disestablishment of USSAG/7AF was eliminated. Moreover, any change in the organization of USSAG/7AF was to be "recommended by CINCPAC and . . . approved by the JCS and higher authority" and not recommended by COMUSMACV. The JCS approved Hq USSAG/7AF, unrestricted by any precedents in the existing MACV/7AF headquarters, as a "multi-service integrated staff established under a U.S. Air Force commander with a U.S. Army deputy." The JCS instructed CINCPAC to structure USSAG/7AF so as to provide for the control of the DRSTO in the RVN.⁶³

~~(C GDS-83)~~ In Saigon, where Hq MACV had controlled all U.S. military forces for over a decade, planners seemed to be imbued with the feeling that the establishment of Hq USSAG/7AF was, when stripped of its trappings, a "redeployment" of Hq MACV. Since they were concerned with transferring functions and responsibilities from MACV/7AF to USSAG/7AF, it is understandable that there would be an inclination to rely on precedents.⁶⁴ Hq MACV/7AF recommendations contained frequent references to "following the pattern of Hq MACV" and "redeployment," as if its institutional form was to be perpetuated. These traditions, however,

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were not to be bequeathed. The JCS modification of MACV planning proposals officially dampened all tendencies of this sort.

~~(C-889-85)~~ The JCS approved a mission for USSAG/7AF which was only slightly modified from that which was submitted by CINCPAC: 65

USSAG/7AF, Thailand, will plan for resumption of an effective air campaign in Laos, Cambodia, RVN and NVN as directed by CINCPAC; maintain a command and control structure for the management of air elements which may be committed to it and a capability for interface with [the] VNAF air control system; establish and maintain liaison with [the] RVNAF JGS, CTF 77, and committed SAC forces; and exercise command over the Chief, Defense Resources Support and Termination Office (CHDRSTO).

The JCS also approved CINCPAC's recommendations that COMUSSAG/7AF be placed under the operational command of CINCPAC and that COMUSSAG/7AF operationally control Thailand-based USAF assets (except SAC units and Pacific Area Traffic Management Agency (PATMA) controlled C-130 aircraft) when committed to him for combat air operations. The Commander, 13AF, was given command of assigned USAF units, except when they were committed to COMUSSAG/7AF. The Deputy Commander, 13AF, became, by this fiat, Deputy Commander, 7AF, to provide interface between the 7th and 13th AF missions.

~~(C-889-85)~~ In Thailand, COMUSMACTHAI, normally an Army major general, remained the "CINCPAC single senior military representative" notwithstanding the fact that COMUSSAG/7AF was an Air Force four-star general. 66 CINCPAC's recommendations regarding the relationship between COMUSSAG/7AF and the U.S. Ambassador to Thailand were approved bodily by the JCS. The DRSTO was to be a part of the Defense Attache Office, Saigon, but the Chief, DRSTO, was directed to report to COMUSSAG/7AF concerning in-country U.S. DOD/contracted activities and DOD statutory responsibilities. The JCS approved, with some modifications, the 16 specific functions and responsibilities defined by CINCPAC for USSAG/7AF. Included were such functions as JCRC activities, interfacing with the VNAF tactical air control system, establishing policies for the effective operation of communications-electronics for command and control, and evaluating USAF force levels in Thailand. The JCS approval clearly emphasized the separation of USSAG/7AF from the existing command structure in Thailand:

These terms of reference in no way alter the existing terms of reference of COMUSMACTHAI/CHJUSMAGTHAI/DEPCHJUSMAGTHAI or their relationships with Chief, U.S. Diplomatic Mission, Thailand, or CINCPAC.

This policy notwithstanding the command relationships in Thailand were not entirely satisfactory to the principals (refer to page 88).

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE POLICY ON COMMAND REORGANIZATION

~~(C GDS 84)~~ Contemporaneously with military planning, the Department of State began putting together its policy for U.S. forces in Thailand with the U.S. Mission there. On 10 December 1972, Washington time, Secretary Rogers informed Ambassador Unger in Bangkok of the military planning which provided for the "orderly movement of essential command and control functions from Saigon to Thailand" without an impairment of required operations.⁶⁷ He also explored the rationale and policy considerations in maintaining Hq USSAG/7AF in Thailand through two post-~~cease-fire~~ stages. The Secretary instructed Ambassador Unger to begin consultations immediately with the Thai Government with the purpose of securing its approval for establishing USSAG/7AF at NKP.

~~(C GDS 84)~~ Secretary Rogers explained the planning assumptions for the forces in Thailand which supported the cease-fire initiatives undertaken by Dr. Kissinger in Paris and the need for keeping USSAG/7AF functions separate from those of MACTHAI in Bangkok. In addition to the practical need for transferring command and control functions in "an orderly manner" to Nakhon Phanom, the guidelines followed by both the Departments of Defense and State were to:

- Avoid complex command and control arrangements.
- Minimize personnel requirements in the new command and control structure.
- Minimize changes in "current arrangements for Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand."
- Plan for a later transition "to a more austere command structure in SEA."
- Incorporate no changes in the relationship by which the United States deals with the Thai Government.
- Maintain a capability to "resume Air/Naval combat operations."

~~(C GDS 84)~~ Rogers emphasized that the two planning states were keyed to "events rather than the passage of particular periods of time."⁶⁸ The first stage was to begin with the Vietnam cease fire (X day) and continue through the cease-fires anticipated in Laos and Cambodia. Since the cease-fire for Cambodia did not materialize on the heels of those attained in Vietnam and Laos, one of the basic expectations for quickly reducing the responsibilities of USSAG/7AF and, hence, its structure, was not realized.

~~(C GDS 84)~~ The second stage, as seen by the Department of State, was a period during which "conditions in Indochina would be somewhat more clarified" so that the Thailand force structure could be reviewed and consolidated. Rogers affirmed that the minimizing of operational disruption during the command relocation was the most important objective of the first stage and the determining of the "most efficient and

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effective SEA command arrangement and Thailand force structure," the most important during the second stage.

~~(C ODS 84)~~ The Secretary also summarized the progress of joint services planning for USSAG/7AF, explaining that it would be a multi-service integrated headquarters with a staffing of about 625 personnel, including seven general officers and 26 colonels. An additional 100 persons were to be assigned to colocated units.

~~(C ODS 84)~~ Having agreed to the reasons for moving command and control functions to Thailand, Rogers explained that the major thought in establishing Hq USSAG/7AF was to transfer only those MACV/7AF functions "to USSAG/7AF that are absolutely necessary." The other functions were to be eliminated or taken over by the DAO in Saigon. Secretary Rogers reasoned that since USSAG/7AF, a transitional organization which would be "disestablished as soon as circumstances permit," would be concerned exclusively with the air war and with the RVNAF, none of USSAG/7AF's functions were of a type which could be taken over by MACTHAI. To this end, Unger was authorized to inform the Thai Government that the Department of State review of planning for USSAG/7AF could find no responsibilities which MACTHAI could assume. Moreover, it was desired by the U.S. Government that efforts be made to avoid integrating USSAG/7AF's activities with MACTHAI because the new headquarters was expected to respond "appropriately to actions" required in supporting national policy in SE Asia and because it was expected to be "in a position to reduce its functions" in synchronization with the anticipated cooperativeness of Vietnamese and other communist insurgents.

~~(C ODS 84)~~ If the phraseology of a Department of State message is taken as evidence, it can be concluded that the department was willing to take certain expedient measures in order to facilitate the transfer of command and control from Vietnam to Thailand. Secretary Rogers advised Ambassador Unger that:⁶⁹

[The] command relationship between DRSTO, Saigon, and USSAG/7AF does not, we believe, need to be made explicit to the Royal Thai Government if you believe doing so will raise problems for them.

On this basis, it could be said that some policy guidelines for establishing USSAG/7AF were overly sensitive to the imagined responses of the military regime in Thailand and, therefore, liable to its whims. Some of the problems encountered by the Ambassador in this matter are described in following paragraphs.

~~(C ODS 84)~~ Rogers assured Unger that there were no plans for establishing an RVNAF section within Hq USSAG/7AF. It was reasonable to anticipate, however, that RVNAF personnel would visit USSAG/7AF from time

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to time for coordinating activities of mutual interest. As described previously, the joint State/Defense planning anticipated that a FANK (Forces Armee Nationales Khmeres) liaison section would be colocated with Hq USSAG/7AF. This section was to be a validation center for proposed air/ground targets in Cambodia, a function which was apparently superseded by incorporating FANK liaison as a part of the airborne command and control centers.⁷⁰ Because of the political considerations of a FANK section at USSAG/7AF, Secretary Rogers agreed with the Ambassador that the Government of the Khmer Republic should negotiate directly with the Thai Government to explain its need for such a section.

~~(C ODS 84)~~ Unger was urged to begin negotiations with the RTG to obtain their approval. Rogers explained that a USSAG Advanced Echelon (ADVON) would be deployed to NKP before X-day in order to prepare the way for the main movement of equipment and personnel, immediately after Thai approval was obtained. Because of the uncertainties of the Paris negotiations, Secretary Rogers advised that the RTG should be fully apprised of the reality that this was the extent of current planning and that it could be readily changed by modifications in the cease-fire agreement itself or by political-military encounters in Indochina proper.⁷¹

~~(C ODS 84)~~ The AmEmb Bangkok was also authorized to inform the Thai Government that during the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Vietnam and the establishment of Hq USSAG/7AF, U.S. personnel strengths in Thailand would not exceed the numbers in-country during the redeployments to meet the 30 March 1972 NVA offensive in South Vietnam. Although this personnel strength level had been generally discussed as 45,000 military personnel, it was not the intention of the U.S. Government to establish a ceiling at this figure.⁷² It should be noted that even though U.S. forces in Thailand were reduced from these high levels in the following months, the large numbers and their high visibility were to be the source of criticism by increasing numbers of Thai citizens after the ouster of the military regime in October 1973 (refer to pages 76-78, 83, 92, 98-99).

SEPARATE HQ 7AF ELIMINATED

~~(C ODS 83)~~ As anticipated by some,* Hq MACV/7AF deleted, on 31 January 1973, the 54 manpower spaces which had been planned for a separate Hq 7AF at NKP, provided that CINCPAC concurred with the decision.⁷³ In making his decision, CINCPAC sought CINCPACAF's advice. PACAF's recommendations were imaginative, since Air Force identification was maintained at NKP while manpower authorizations were eliminated. CINCPACAF reasoned that the deletion of 54 "non-operational spaces" scheduled for Hq 7AF would alleviate the personnel support problem at the base where such support facilities would be severely taxed when Hq USSAG/7AF was established there. Moreover, the non-operational functions could be assumed by Hq 13AF or Hq 7/13AF from Hq 7AF. PACAF

*(U) Hq 7AF planners had expected to have their headquarters abolished.

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pointed out, however, the necessity for continuing the lineage of 7AF at NKP as "a means of providing continuity for successive steps of the Thailand command and control apparatus."

~~(C GDS 83)~~ There had been some indications that the reexamination of Hq USSAG/7AF at X plus 60, as directed by the JCS and/or the Secretary of Defense, could result in a unilateral Air Force operation to succeed the joint arrangement.* The retention of 7AF personnel at NKP within the USSAG/7AF structure, accordingly, would "provide a nucleus of USAF expertise in the event USSAG/7AF changes to a unilateral USAF operation." Readily available expertise would provide a smooth transition to a follow-on command and control arrangement with the least turbulence. A sleight of hand in manpower alignment was performed by PACAF planners at this point. They recommended that:⁷⁴

... concurrent with the deletion of the 54 Hq 7AF UDL spaces at NKP the USSAG/7AF JTD be amended to reverse the USAF JTD spaces now annotated as dual-hatted to 7AF, to reflect 7AF UDL spaces dual-hatted to USSAG. These 7AF UDL spaces dual-hatted to USSAG, with no changes in personnel assignment, would satisfy the requirement for continuity of 7AF. Personnel at NKP would be reduced as well as reducing the USSAG/7AF JTD, and there would be no change in the planning and targeting functions of USSAG/7AF.

~~(C GDS 83)~~ Stated simply, Hq PACAF agreed to MACV's proposed elimination of Hq 7AF (with 54 spaces) at NKP incumbent upon the reversal of authorization for the USAF positions on the USSAG/7AF JTD, identified as dual-hatted to 7AF. The USAF positions were to be authorized to 7AF, an entity existing only in the abstract, and dual-hatted to USSAG/7AF. On 8 February 1973, CINCPAC informed Hq MACV/7AF that the deletion of 54 spaces for a separate Hq 7AF was approved and that the approximately 76 USAF spaces in Hq USSAG/7AF, annotated as dual-hatted to 7AF, be shown as 7AF UDL spaces dual-hatted to USSAG/7AF.⁷⁵ By this action, the manning authorization for USSAG/7AF was reduced by the same number. On 8 March 1973, CINCPAC proposed to the JCS that 78 AF positions be deleted from the USSAG JTD, a decrease of two more.⁷⁶

EVENTS AFFECT SCHEDULE FOR ACTIVATION

~~(C GDS 82)~~ On 4 December 1972, Hq MACV/7AF drew up a "realtime" schedule for establishing the new headquarters at NKP,⁷⁷ basing it upon two assumptions. First, it was estimated that the development of the minimum physical plant for USSAG/7AF could not be completed before 15 January 1973. Secondly, 10 December 1972 was anticipated to be cease-fire day. According to this schedule, the lead element of the advanced echelon (ADVON) was to deploy to NKP on or about 9 December 1972, initiating all preparations for the deployment of command and control elements.

*~~(U)~~ As indicated on page 23 and the passage of the Church and Cooper-Church amendments.

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~~(C-GDS-82)~~ Before the movement of the remainder of the ADVON, COMUSMACV was to request CINCPAC to formally activate USSAG/7AF. It was anticipated that the full complement of the advanced echelon would deploy to NKP on or about 1 January 1973. After the main body had substantially deployed to Thailand and "at a time mutually satisfactory to both COMUSMACV and COMUSSAG/7AF," CINCPAC would direct USSAG/7AF to assume its assigned missions and functions. Following establishment and as quickly as practicable, the main body would complete its deployment to NKP.⁷⁸ As it happened, the schedule could not be kept because of the postponement of country clearance for the headquarters by the AmEmb Bangkok, and, more fundamentally, because of the change in North Vietnamese attitudes toward the peace negotiations which ended in a total impasse on 13 December.⁷⁹

(U) On 9 December 1972, Hq MACV/7AF notified Hq PACOM in Hawaii that the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok had withheld the clearance for the ADVON to enter Thailand until it had received an approval for granting entry from the Department of State.⁸⁰ The Saigon command assured CINCPAC that the advanced echelon would remain ready and be prepared to move immediately upon receiving the Secretary of State's (SecState) approval. As it turned out, the clearance was not received until two months had passed, a period during which the intensified bombing of the Hanoi-Haiphong area occurred (Linebacker II) and North Vietnamese intransigence gave way to the signing of the cease-fire.*

INITIAL OPPOSITION TO A MAJOR HEADQUARTERS IN THAILAND

~~(C-GDS-83)~~ The underlying political considerations needed to be taken into account for understanding the initial opposition, voiced by the AmEmb in Bangkok, to establishing Hq USSAG/7AF when JCS planning began in November 1972. It should be recalled that Ambassador Unger cautioned against placing Hq USSAG/7AF in Thailand because such a move was expected to adversely affect U.S.-Thai relations.⁸¹

~~(S-XGDS-1,2,3-84)~~ During the months of the negotiations for a cease-fire in Vietnam and the early months of 1973, the AmEmb had begun reacting sensitively to adjustments that the Thanom Government began making with Communist bloc countries. This broadening of Thailand's foreign relations was necessitated by U.S. initiatives to withdraw from Vietnam.

* ~~(S-XGDS-3-85)~~ Cease-fire--The National Military Command Center instructed that "an internationally supervised cease-fire in South Vietnam and the Demilitarized Zone will be instituted," effective 272359Z Jan 73 (0759 hours, 28 Jan, Saigon time). At that time, all acts of force "initiated by U.S. forces in North Vietnam and South Vietnam and the Demilitarized Zone" were ordered to be discontinued.

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For more than two decades, Thailand had assumed a strong pro-Western and anti-communist position, a commitment supported in deed by the fighting of Thai military units in Korea and Vietnam alongside U.S. combat units. Since both the United States and Thailand had adhered to a policy of close cooperation over a wide variety of Asian and world problems, it was consistent for Ambassador Unger to review force deployments in terms of their possible effect on U.S.-Thai relationships.⁸²

~~(C GDS 83)~~ The Ambassador had recommended, in November 1972, that a unilateral Air Force headquarters be established at NKP instead of a joint or multi-service headquarters. His reasoning was that "such an organization would not, in the eyes of the Government of Thailand, increase U.S. visibility in Thailand" and would "be less of a constraint in GOT [Government of Thailand] dealings with third countries."

RTG APPROVAL OF ACTIVATION AND ISSUES OF SENSITIVITY

~~(C GDS 81)~~ The Thai Government's reluctance to publicly acknowledge the movement of JCRC to NKP in addition to the establishment of USSAG/7AF there caused Ambassador Unger some anxious moments. At a luncheon held in honor of Dr. Kissinger who was in Bangkok in early February 1973 in connection with his visit to Hanoi, the Ambassador conferred with the RTG Prime Minister, Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn, and confirmed the Thai Government's cautious approval of the movement of the JCRC and USSAG/7AF to Thailand. The RTG authorization was transmitted by the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok to the Department of State on 9 February 1973.⁸³ On the same day, COMUSMACTHAI informed all concerned that the RTG "clearance" included all U.S. forces listed by COMUSMACV on 31 January 1973 as necessary for the functioning of the new headquarters.⁸⁴

~~(C GDS 81)~~ The Prime Minister of the RTG, who was deposed nine months later, repeated his strong objection to a public announcement "on grounds that he had already put on record that there will be a change in units at NKP."⁸⁵ In acquiescing to U.S. reasoning that an acknowledgement would have to be made when the press made inquiries, Thanom agreed that it could be done in Washington, but as low-keyed and restrained as possible. The AmEmb advised that "the sooner an opportunity is found the better to have it on record when USSAG is established." Since the Thai military regimes often made decisions without justifying their reasons in public, a normal public information procedure in the United States was not the same in Thailand.* As a result, U.S. coordination on policy matters with the RTG, particularly when there was a tacit accommodation to its decision-making, resulted in uneasy U.S. feelings. In this case, Ambassador Unger hoped that other "headline grabbing events" such as Dr. Kissinger's visit and the release of U.S. prisoners of war by North Vietnam would provide enough diversions so that the military deployment would go unnoticed.

* (U) A problem quickly identified and described by Ambassador William R. Kintner following the revolution of October 1973. Refer to pages 74-77.

~~(G GDS 81)~~ Soon thereafter, the AmEmb in Bangkok informed all concerned that the country clearance had been acquired from the RTG "using only the acronym USSAG and assumed that USSAG/7AF would not be used." In its cooperation, Hq 7AF quickly classified all references to the title "USSAG/7AF." The JCS, in joining the discussion, pointed out that an earlier Department of State message had recommended that the acronym "USSAG" be used "for public reference to the USSAG/7AF headquarters." In clarifying a military position on the matter, the JCS directed all to bear in mind that the official title of the headquarters at NKP was "USSAG/7AF," which was, until further notice, to be safeguarded as "for official use only." Seventh Air Force was advised to reflect the change. In the meantime, the JCS was requesting the Department of State to clarify the "intent and duration" of the assumptions underlying the restriction on references to 7AF in the title.⁸⁶

(U) This situation arose, in part, from the different behavioral context of the Thai public administration system which did not contain an obligation for informing citizens of these matters nor a need for completing or finalizing official actions. An authority on Thai administrative behavior, James N. Mosel,* attributed these differences with U.S. procedures mainly to the "loosely structured nature of Thai culture" in which a person "is by necessity an individualist and displays an almost determined lack of regularity and regimentation." Work was more likely to be "ego-oriented" than "task-oriented" with an emphasis on "outward, displayable aspects of performance." As a result, the approval by the RTG Prime Minister of the establishment of USSAG/7AF was much more important than the formalizing of the action.

ACTIVATION OF USSAG/7AF

~~(G GDS 83)~~ On 31 January 1973, Bangkok time, COMUSMACV informed COMUSMACTHAI of the composition of forces which would constitute USSAG/7AF when it was established so that clearances for entering Thailand could be obtained.⁸⁷ The following units and spaces were to be at NKP upon establishment:

*James N. Mosel, "Thai Administrative Behavior," in Toward the Comparative Study of Public Administration, ed by William J. Siffin (Indiana University, 1957), pp 278-331. Before the change in government in Oct 73, there had been no tradition in Thailand of instituting reform by pressure groups outside the top political leadership. Since earliest times in Thai history, the flow of social and political influence had always been from top to bottom with very little feedback in the opposite direction. This was in harmony with the customary Thai respect for and deference to those in higher authority. Despite the constitutional form of the more recent governments, each administration behaved, in Mosel's terms, "to a large degree as if it were occurring within an absolute monarchy."

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Hq USSAG/7AF

586 (JTD)*

(Add on units)		AFSSO	8
		1st CEG	21
Det 6, 7602d Air Intel Gp	12	AFSC	4
Crypto Support Group	25	JCRC	139
Sentinel Lock	6	Hq 7AF	0*
Compass Link	8	(Base Spt Augmentations)	
Det, 500th Mil Intel Gp	11	Support Aircraft Elem	96
SAC ADVON	24	Security Police	74
Fleet Coordinating Gp	24	3d ARG	7
FANK Liaison (Khmer)	13	Weather Det	17
Army Signal Spt (Radio Relay)	18		
		Total	1,093

In addition to those elements listed in the total, the 12th Reconnaissance Intelligence Technical Squadron (91 personnel) and Project CHECO (6 personnel) were to be assigned to the 432d Tactical Reconnaissance Wing at Udorn, Thailand, as augmentation in support of Hq USSAG/7AF. However, the former was inactivated at Tan Son Nhut AB on 15 March 1973.⁸⁸

~~(C GDS 89)~~ On 14 February 1973, Hq MACV/7AF notified Hq PACOM in Hawaii that USSAG/7AF was activated on 10 February 1973.⁸⁹ Personnel movements were compressed in order to compensate for the delay in country clearance so that by 12 February the activation of Hq USSAG/7AF was back on schedule.⁹⁰ By the takeover date of 15 February 1973, when the command and control of the air war in SE Asia was transferred from Hq MACV/7AF to Hq USSAG/7AF, 53 per cent of all headquarters personnel were in place at NKP. CINCPAC assumed operational command of Hq USSAG/7AF on that date. MACV/7AF retained the responsibility for complete MACV redeployment, for operational command of DAO, for operational command of the U.S. Delegation to the Joint Military Commission, and for other functions that CINCPAC levied.⁹¹ These responsibilities were retained by COMUSMACV until he departed the RVN on 29 March 1973. Moreover, COMUSMACV placed no little emphasis on COMUSSAG/7AF retaining the title of DEPCOMUSMACV until Hq MACV/7AF was disestablished. This was to "facilitate continuity of control of on-going air support for MACV deployment."

~~(C GDS 82)~~ With attention to detail, Hq MACV/7AF specified the timing of the transfer of precisely differentiated functions from Saigon to NKP.⁹² Summarized, however, 11 specific functions were designed for

* (U) USMACV General Order 619, 11 Feb 73, authorized 295 officers, 294 enlisted men, and 5 DOD civilians for a total of 594 personnel.

* (U) As described previously, the 54 spaces originally programmed for a separate Hq 7AF were deleted.

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transfer to NKP; eight were transferred on 15 February, leaving residual responsibilities until MACV's disestablishment. When General Vogt assumed command of Hq USSAG/7AF on 15 February, he acquired responsibilities for contingency planning in a cease-fire breakdown, including the resumption of operations in Laos, Cambodia, RVN, and NVN; control of USAF tactical air resources; intelligence and targeting data; interfacing with VNAF and liaison with the RVNAF JGS, CTF-77, and committed SAC forces; contingency planning for reentry into RVN; controlling JCRC operations; controlling all forces and agencies assigned by CINCPAC; and evaluating USAF force levels in Thailand.

~~(C GDS 82)~~ Between the date of its establishment on 15 February and the Laotian cease-fire on 22 February, USSAG/7AF continued to direct full strike operations in Laos.⁹³ In preparation for the transition, the complete fragmentary orders for 15 February, directing more than 500 U.S. Air Force, Navy, and Marine sorties, were prepared, computerized, and transmitted from Saigon to all units on the day prior to takeover. At 0700 hours on 15 February, command and control of air operations was assumed by NKP with relative ease. Prepositioned computers at NKP were loaded with current data flown from MACV on the night of 14 February and the first fragmentary order was dispatched from NKP on 15 February without problem.

~~(C GDS 83)~~ In the Khmer Republic, air strikes, FAC operations, and convoy escort sorties were continued by USSAG/7AF until the congressionally-mandated cut-off of combat air operations on 15 August 1973. Support air operations were also continued at the direction of USSAG/7AF. They included photo reconnaissance of lines of communications and intelligence-identified targets as well as EC-47 and U-21 missions in Laos, RVN, and the Khmer Republic.⁹⁴

~~(C GDS 85)~~ COMUSSAG/7AF, through the Chief of Staff and Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations (ACS/O), maintained control of U.S. air assets by using the capabilities of an extensive command and control system.⁹⁵ Individual operational units were tasked daily by a computerized fragmentary order. This automated system was designed for self-execution "by directing an event time of time-over-target." COMUSSAG/7AF took note of the efficiencies gained by the system:⁹⁶

The computerization of the air war is, I think, an interesting phenomenon. It used to take a lot of people a lot of time to put out the frag orders everyday to get the missions going. Now it's done by computers and we're able to save a lot of manpower that way. We saved a lot of people in the headquarters who were wrapped up in the laborious processes of determining fuel routes and requirements for timing and so forth--all done for us by computers now. So management techniques are improving and the equipment in support of these techniques is vastly improved.

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The tactical air control center (TACC) directed cancellations, diversions, delays, ordnance changes based on weather, changing priorities or other operational considerations. Another responsibility assumed by operations was air defense for the protection of U.S. land-based assets in SE Asia. In addition, the central point of expertise on rules of engagement and air operating authorities remained with the target management office.

~~(C-GDS-83)~~ Hq USSAG/7AF had an organizational structure of a typical J-staff except that the planning functions normally found in J-5 were incorporated into other J-agencies with J-3 acquiring a majority of them. The Hq 7AF functions were performed by 95 dual-hatted positions.

CLEARER RTG ATTITUDES ABOUT USSAG/7AF:
POSSIBILITIES OF LONG TERM ACCEPTANCE

~~(C-GDS-83)~~ Soon after the activation of USSAG/7AF, Hq USAF pointed out to CINCPACAF and COMUSSAG/7AF that the adverse impact that Ambassador Unger had anticipated about the new command did not materialize. Thai relations with other countries did not seem to have been constrained by the new command arrangements. Moreover, information obtained by the Air Staff from "State Department officers knowledgeable in U.S./Thai relations" affirmed that the RTG was willing to have the "U.S. retain its programmed force posture and organizational structures in Thailand for the foreseeable future." On the basis of this counterbalancing information, Hq USAF concluded that the Thai Government acceptance of deployed U.S. forces would not change appreciably over "the next several months."⁹⁸ This estimate, of course, could not anticipate the political upheaval that was to occur in October 1973.

~~(C-GDS-83)~~ At this juncture, Hq USAF inquired if Ambassador Unger might provide a State Department view on the effect of the continuation of Hq USSAG/7AF on Thai foreign relations. USAF requested General Vogt to determine, in conversations with Ambassador Unger, what his opinions might be on the continuation of the joint headquarters at NKP. Since a major point to be proposed in the JCS review was improved management of all U.S. combat air operations under a single authority in SE Asia, Hq USAF desired that Ambassador Unger be made cognizant of the fact that "the increased responsibilities and authority. . . [envisioned] for COMUSSAG/7AF would not result in an organizational expansion or increased headquarters manning at NKP." General Horace M. Wade, Vice Chief of Staff, aware of the Ambassador's concern for Thai Government sensitivities, stressed the need for conveying USAF's objectives of improved management and, as a result, the advancement of the principle of force application:⁹⁹

It is our desire, that the Ambassador not view [the] broadening of COMUSSAG/7AF responsibilities and authority as an effort to expand U.S. presence in Thailand, but rather as an effort to achieve more efficient and effective management in using combat air resources allocated to SE Asia.

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This policy guidance was both appropriate and timely. Its effectiveness could be gauged by the response from the two USAF commanders in the Pacific.

~~(C-GDS-83)~~ CINCPACAF's reply on 9 March 1973 was the first indication that USSAG/7AF would be maintained beyond the time originally planned for its existence. The headquarters at Hickam AFB forwarded the positions and rationale provided by General Vogt, adding those of General Clay:¹⁰⁰

With regard to future arrangements, it appears that USSAG or something closely akin to it will be required for some time. Gen Vogt notes that recent discussions with Ambassadors Sullivan and Unger envisioned retention of USSAG for at least the next two years. Gen Vogt adds that Ambassador Sullivan asked Ambassador Unger to de-emphasize the temporary nature of USSAG and stress that Dr. Kissinger and Vice President Agnew had provided positive assurances of firm U.S. intent to maintain an air capability to safeguard peace. In Gen Vogt's view, we will not find obstacles in the way of an expanded mission or continued USSAG presence.

As it turned out, the Ambassadors' estimation of the life of Hq USSAG/7AF was quite accurate.

HQ 7/13AF REDESIGNATED HQ 13AF ADVON

~~(C-GDS-82)~~ Among the dual-hatted 7AF positions on the USSAG UDL was that of the deputy commander who was, at the same time, the Deputy Commander of Hq 7/13AF which was located at Udorn RTAFB.¹⁰¹ During preliminary discussions on command arrangements in SE Asia, CINCPACAF reminded planners that the Deputy Commander, 7/13AF was also the Deputy Commander, 13AF, reporting as he did to the Commanders of both 7AF and 13AF.¹⁰²

~~(C-GDS-81)~~ On 13 March 1973, CINCPACAF, General Lucius D. Clay, Jr., concurred with Lt Gen George J. Eade, DCS/Plans and Operations, Hq USAF, that Hq 7/13AF should be redesignated as 13AF ADVON.¹⁰³ Clay suggested that the title Deputy Commander, 7/13AF, be changed to Commander, 13AF ADVON. The Commander, 13AF ADVON, was expected to coordinate with the U.S. Embassy, Vientiane, Laos, and the Deputy Chief, MACTHAI. General Clay informed Hq USAF that these recommendations had been approved by both 7AF and 13AF.

~~(C-GDS-83)~~ After the movement of personnel from Saigon to NKP and the activation of Hq USSAG/7AF, it became obvious that the 7AF element of Hq 7/13AF was superfluous.¹⁰⁴ Since coordination on the subject had

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already been pursued in PACOM, CINCPAC notified the U.S. Ambassadors to Thailand and Laos, on 24 March 1973, that Hq 7/13AF would be redesignated Hq 13AF ADVON, effective X plus 60.¹⁰⁵ At the same time, the Deputy Commander, 7/13AF, would become Commander, 13AF ADVON. CINCPAC assured the Ambassadors that COMUSMACTHAI remained CINCPAC's single senior military representative in Thailand.

DISESTABLISHMENT OF HQ MACV/7AF

(U) As he departed Vietnam on 29 March 1973, COMUSMACV notified the JCS and CINCPAC that USMACV would be disestablished at 1900 hours local time (1100 hours Zulu) on 29 March 1973.¹⁰⁶ All concerned were notified on 30 March 1973 that MACV had been disestablished with COMUSSAG/7AF at NKP and USDAO, Saigon, assuming MACV's residual responsibilities.¹⁰⁷ As a result of the disbanding of MACV, COMUSSAG/7AF assumed:

- Operational command of DAO, Saigon, without attache responsibilities.
- Supervision and/or coordination, through DAO, of DOD and U.S. contracted activities in the RVN, including logistics, intelligence, training, JGS liaison, operations, and communications-electronics.
- Similar monitorship of security assistance planning for the RVN.
- Submission of the commander's report on SE Asian activities.
- Publication of a daily intelligence summary.
- Management of intelligence collection activities.
- Representation in the DOD indications system.

Thus, the shifting of responsibilities from Hq USMACV to Hq USSAG/7AF was completed.

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III. USSAG/7AF AND THE ISSUE OF A SINGLE MANAGER FOR AIR*

SECDEF SEEKS TO IMPROVE COMMAND ARRANGEMENTS AND TASKING OF AIR OPERATIONS

~~(C ODS-83)~~ In planning the reorganization of the command structure in SE Asia for supporting the cease-fire in Vietnam, Secretary of Defense (SecDef) Melvin R. Laird directed, as early as 21 November 1972, that the targeting and tasking procedures of USSAG/7AF be reexamined immediately after X plus 60 (28 March 1973).¹⁰⁸ While the SecDef requested this examination in conjunction with a study for determining whether to retain, disestablish, or modify USSAG/7AF, the order revived an abiding issue for USAF, the debate over a single manager for air operations during hostilities. The Air Force arguments were cogently presented, but did not result in USSAG/7AF acquiring clear-cut single management of air resources in SE Asia. These discussions did succeed, however, in airing doctrinal differences with the U.S. Navy as well as the reluctance of USAF planners to superintend their own strategic forces with a tactical commander.

~~(C CDS 82)~~ In a continuing effort to gain more effective management of air resources, Hq USAF reemphasized to both Hq PACAF and Hq USSAG/7AF the necessity for advocating anew the reasonable, long-standing proposals on improving the tasking of air operations in hostilities when the JCS reviewed follow-on command arrangements.¹⁰⁹ General Horace M. Wade, Vice Chief of Staff, informed General Clay, CINCPACAF, and General Vogt, COM-USSAG/7AF, on 23 February 1973, Thailand time, that Hq USAF would "stress the need for and desirability of command arrangements that clearly provide unified management of all U.S. combat air operations under a single authority in SE Asia" and would "emphasize both military and management advantages that could accrue from such command arrangements." The Vice Chief requested both commanders to provide an assessment of the existing command structure, particularly its deficiencies, and a review of improvements needed in the targeting and tasking authority for all U.S. combat air resources.

**(U) Single Manager for Air--The person who establishes and attains objectives for carrying out airpower responsibilities in an area of operations. The manager continues those actions of planning organizing, directing, coordinating, controlling, and evaluating the use of men, money, materials, and facilities to accomplish missions and tasks. The act of management is inherent in command, but it does not include as extensive authority and responsibility as command. For previous discussions of this issue, refer to Project CHECO reports, Single Manager for Air in SVN, by Warren A. Trest, 1 Jul 68, and Single Manager for Air in SVN, by Lt Col Robert M. Burch, 18 Mar 69, and Office of Air Force History monograph, Air Power and the Fight for Khe Sanh, by Bernard C. Nalty, 1973.*

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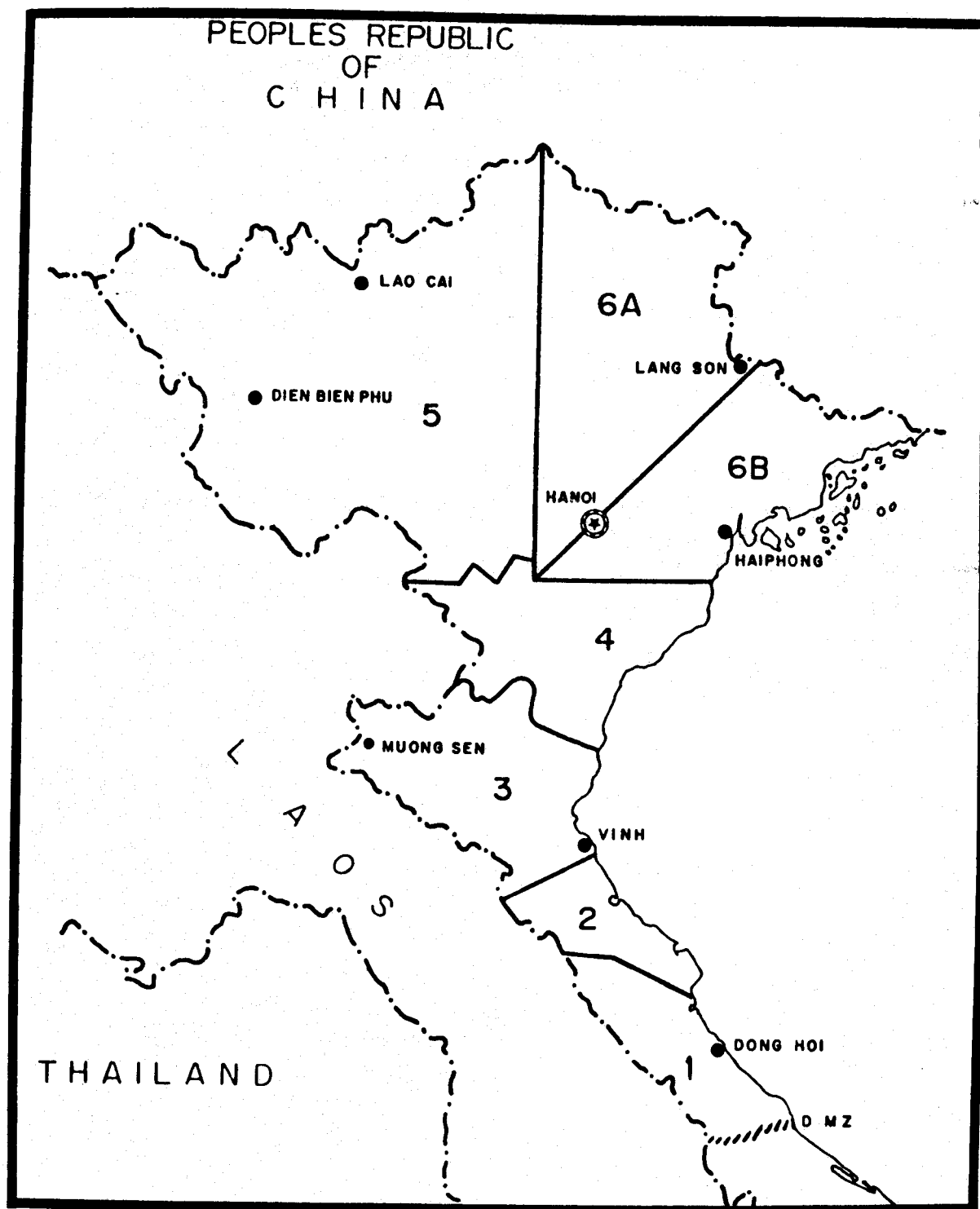


Figure 3

(U)

NORTH VIETNAM ROUTE PACKAGE AREAS

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~~(C GDS 83)~~ Since it was anticipated by Hq USAF that the JCS would not be unanimous in their support of the Air Force position for a single manager for air, the Secretary of Defense was to be informed of the details of the Air Force proposals so that a fair decision could be reached.¹¹⁰ In Hq USAF's efforts to marshal the facts, CINCPACAF and COMUSSAG/7AF were asked to provide their respective evaluations of the "post cease-fire environment as it impacts on command arrangements in SE Asia." As the starting point, the two USAF commanders in the Pacific were asked to provide their opinions on the "need to retain, modify or disestablish USSAG/7AF." General Wade also desired their estimation of CINCPAC's probable course of action in his maintenance of command arrangements in SE Asia.

~~(C GDS 83)~~ Wade explained that it was the intention of Hq USAF to vigorously pursue more efficient and effective management of combat air resources in SE Asia as a part of a longer range program "to achieve unified management of air power in all potential conflict areas worldwide." It was USAF's contention that if single management for air in SE Asia were achieved, it would establish a strong precedent for similar action on a broader scale. General Wade emphasized that it was Hq USAF's intention to maintain:¹¹¹

. . . . that COMUSSAG/7AF should have the responsibility and authority to accomplish the planning, intelligence, targeting and tasking functions for all U.S. combat air operations in SE Asia required in the event of a cease-fire breakdown. Laos, Cambodia, RVN, and NVN should be treated as a single, homogeneous area of responsibility under USSAG/7AF. COMUSSAG/7AF should target and task all combat air resources allocated to SE Asia to include not only USAF TACAIR and B-52s, but Navy air as well.

While the basic motives for improving the management of tasking air operations were practical and worthwhile, there was less success in this attempt than there had been in earlier times.

THE KHE SANH PRECEDENT FOR A SINGLE MANAGER

~~(S NF XGDS 3 98)~~ During 1968, COMUSMACV had succeeded in acquiring more effective management of air operations in Vietnam than was previously possible because of the magnitude of the TACAIR support of ground elements at Khe Sanh.¹¹² On 2 March 1968, while Operation Niagara* was underway, CINCPAC had provided COMUSMACV with authority for single management of strike and reconnaissance assets in I Corps tactical zone (ICTZ) which affected forces belonging primarily to USAF and USMC. USN and B-52 forces were not placed under this centralized control. Letters to the Deputy Commander for Air Operations (Hq MACV) and Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force (CG, III MAF), established single management on 8 March. The implementation of the concept on 10 March 1968 culminated a two-year

* (U) Operation Niagara--USAF participation in the battle of Khe Sanh.

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effort to integrate the direction and control of air resources based in Vietnam and assigned to COMUSMACV under the Deputy Commander for Air Operations. Following the implementation, single management was formalized in a MACV directive, the effectiveness of which was clouded by a Deputy Secretary of Defense decision that the arrangements should be considered temporary.

~~(S NF XGDS-3-98)~~ The absence of centralized control at the beginning of Niagara had created an untenable situation in which two separate air forces were conducting independent air operations in a compressed geographical area.¹¹³ This situation was worsened by the fact that a large number of USN tactical sorties and B-52 sorties were brought into the same area of operations. In 70 days of around-the-clock air operations, more than 21,000 tactical strike sorties and 2,500 B-52 sorties were eventually flown around Khe Sanh. As could be expected, the deficiencies in command and control caused saturation and stacking of aircraft from the start, resulting in strike aircraft returning to base with ordnance and failure of mission.¹¹⁴ Since ground operations were integrated and combined, Hq MACV argued that there was no way to divide the effort by geographic area and still prevent overlapping or interference between 7AF, 1st Marine Air Wing (1 MAW), and carrier forces. As a result, COMUSMACV had argued early in Operation Niagara for effective coordination and control of air operations under a single manager.

~~(S NF XGDS-3-98)~~ From the air commander's point of view, the objective of single management was to provide optimum airpower within the boundaries established by the tactical situation with the resources available to him--while assuring utmost conditions of safety and effectiveness for the participants.¹¹⁵ Under single management, coordination between participating air forces could be accomplished more smoothly and effectively; the most effective cycling of air planning and application of resources could be realized both in Niagara operations and in operations throughout SVN and the extended battle area.

~~(S XGDS-3-98)~~ Having received authority, COMUSMACV instructed the Commander, 7AF, to draw up plans to integrate the function of control of the 1 MAW's fixed wing aviation into the tactical air control system, but to preserve Marine air/ground team integrity as much as possible.¹¹⁶ This was done. Since the function of control was the issue, the command lines of the 1 MAW were not violated and remained with the CG, III MAF. While flying their required sorties, the Marines energetically objected to the arrangements, focusing their arguments about roles and missions, the disadvantages of 7AF's producer-oriented system (compared to their own consumer-oriented system), and the control prerogatives of the ground commander. Rising above the parochial issues, the air commander made necessary adjustments. The system was improved so that eventually single management operated procedurally between the previous USAF/Army and Marine systems.¹¹⁷

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(S-~~YCD~~ 3 98) One of the innovations which grew out of the adversary positions on single management was what was termed the "modified preplanned system" for distributing sorties.¹¹⁸ Strike sorties available for use on a preplanned basis were divided for allocation into two groups--70 per cent on a weekly basis through the Weekly Planned Frag and the remaining 30 per cent on a daily basis through the Daily Planned Frag. The method of computing the actual number of sorties allocated was based on several computations. Since the two frag orders were simplified and alike in format, they were more convenient for users. This system successfully combined the virtues of both the previous USMC and Air Force systems while providing a measure of decentralized control of air operations.

* * * * *

(U) By the time Hq USSAG/7AF was activated in Thailand, the role of U.S. forces in SE Asia had become constrained, with responsibilities placed heavily on USAF. U.S. ground combat forces, including USMC units, had been withdrawn from SE Asia. Only U.S. combat air operations were continued and on a steadily diminishing scale. Moreover, any resumption of combat operations by the U.S. Government could be expected to be undertaken only by the air forces of the United States. As a result, the issue of control of air operations remained as important as ever.

EVOLUTION OF SINGLE MANAGER FOR OPERATIONS IN LAOS, CAMBODIA, RVN, AND RP-1

(~~C GDS 83~~) Under changed circumstances, COMUSSAG/7AF maintained that a single tasking and targeting authority already existed for air operations in Laos, Cambodia, South Vietnam, and RP-1 in North Vietnam, but was noticeably lacking in the rest of North Vietnam. He explained his case in a lengthy message to General Clay on 25 February 1973.¹¹⁹ His basic recommendation was that improvements could be made in the conduct of the air war, but "not on grounds that current arrangements have failed." Clearly, air power had had a profound effect on the settlement of the terms which led to the cease-fire in Vietnam. General Vogt explained that by achieving cordial working relationships with the Navy and by utilizing the Fleet Coordinating Group colocated with 7AF, "we have managed to carry the war to the enemy and achieve impressive results." At the same time, however, he noted that the air war, as it had been recently conducted in North Vietnam, was the arena in which a major case could be made for single air management. Refer to Figure 3, page 42, for Route Package areas.

(~~C GDS 83~~) COMUSSAG/7AF explained that in Laos, Cambodia, South Vietnam, and RP-1 there could have been "no other way of running the air war" than to have the Navy provide support as requested.¹²⁰ This evolved, as it had at Khe Sanh, because the major responsibility was to support the ground battle, a mission which did "not lend itself to time-sharing or area

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allocation techniques." In addition, the U.S. Navy did not have the tactical control system, consisting of specialized aircraft such as the ABCCCs and FACs, which was required for managing independent air operations. Because of the rapidly changing targets and timing of strikes, a single tasking and targeting authority was essential for the effective support of friendly ground elements. This is what arose from the close air support functions.

LACK OF UNIFIED OPERATIONS IN NVN AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

~~(S GDS-85)~~ On the other hand, the necessity for unified tasking and targeting in North Vietnam grew from different circumstances. Missions there were planned on the assumption that "time constraints" did not apply where fixed targets were attacked or where lines of communication (LOC) were interdicted.¹²¹ Since sorties could be allocated on the basis of area or time-over-target (TOT) with fixed targets, there had been a mistaken impression that a single manager had not been needed. COMUSSAG/7AF explained that the formidable air defense systems which had been emplaced in North Vietnam, in contrast to the rest of SE Asia, required precisely coordinated air operations that only a single targeting and tasking authority could provide. Instead, during Linebackers I and II, both USAF and USN had independently attacked NVN's air defenses, airfields, and aircraft, using inefficient arrangements. General Vogt pointed out that uncoordinated attacks led to "gaps in coverage," excessive costs from overlapping and duplicated operations, and, more seriously, unnecessary losses.

~~(C GDS-83)~~ Although both the Air Force and Navy had provided mutually supporting electronic jamming of enemy air defense systems and in spite of the Navy assistance with its PIRAZ/Red Crown* control capabilities, COMUSSAG/7AF explained, "by and large, USAF took on the MIGs by itself . . . when striking deep in the Hanoi area, and the Navy took them on separately when they made strikes in their areas."¹²² Rather than a coordinated attack on the MIG/SAM air defense system that would have been possible, U.S. air operations were fragmented and, therefore, more easily handled by the enemy defenses. The situation was summed up:¹²³

During the heavy MIG engagements of June and July [1972], there is no question but that well-coordinated Navy and Air Force strikes, penetrating from the land and sea sides should have saturated enemy MIG and SAM defenses. Since our operating areas had been divided up on the old Rolling Thunder Route Pack

* (U) PIRAZ/Red Crown--Positive identification radar advisory zone/a radar-equipped U.S. Navy Destroyer on station in the northern part of the Gulf of Tonkin.

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basis, this was not possible. I can only conclude that both the Navy and ourselves lost airplanes which need not have gone down had defense saturation tactics employing both forces been utilized.

The serious implications of inadequate targeting and tasking authority were clear.

~~(C ODS 83)~~ The lack of a central tasking authority resulted both in overlapping air strikes on the same target and in inadequately bombing extensive targets such as a logistics system. For example, General Vogt recalled that duplicative strikes were made on the railroad extending northeast from Hanoi, the LOC for which USAF had primary responsibility.¹²⁴ The U.S. Navy had offered USSAG/7AF the use of its A-6s for night attacks on bridges, rail yards, and rolling stock on the NE rail line which was accepted. Although the air commander was responsible for accounting for air operations, Vogt maintained that he was "never in a position to know what the A-6s had accomplished the night before." Inevitably, some targets which had been struck by the Navy were attacked again by USAF aircraft.

Impaired Interdiction of Other LOCs

~~(C ODS 83)~~ The employment of uncoordinated air resources was inconsistent with the tenet of first determining and then applying the proper amount of force against a target. COMUSSAG/7AF contended that a single manager "with a staff of competent intelligence and operational personnel, including naval air and land-based air specialists" could more efficiently plan strikes against an enemy target structure by employing the unique capabilities of naval and land-based air in a manner that would insure "optimum destruction" of the target system as a whole. He noted how planning should have been done:¹²⁵

. . . in Route Pack 6A, certain targets lent themselves to destruction by laser-guided bombs, while others could have been more effectively hit by the Navy Walleye capabilities. During bad weather periods, when Navy F-4s and A-7s could not operate in the target areas, Air Force Loran-equipped Path Finders could have been employed to lead them in, thus, maximizing the impact on the enemy.*

~~(C ODS 83)~~ The interdiction of supply lines which ran from NVN to the RVN could have been better accomplished with central tasking. Gaps in target coverage resulted from uncoordinated USAF and USN air operations. Because of the divided responsibilities, based on Route Pack assignments,

**(U) Walleye--A 1,100-lb glide bomb using a television camera for monitoring its guidance.*

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a coordinated air campaign to disrupt the logistics flow from NVN into the Ho Chi Minh Trail was next to impossible. The limitations of these divided responsibilities, explained General Vogt, resulted in the relatively unimpeded flow of supplies reaching Route Pack 1:126

The Navy concentrated the vast majority of its tactical air efforts in Route Packs 2, 3, and 4 against lines of communications on Routes 1A and the supporting complex of roads which fed traffic into the coastal highways, seldom attacking in force deeper than Thanh Hoa or Vinh. The enemy was able to move virtually untouched along the inner road networks along Route 15 through Bai Thuong, south to Route Pack 1. As a result, the traffic on Routes 15, 101, and 131, into Mu Gia and Ban Karai Passes, received the major portion of the enemy logistics flow.

From the air commander's point of view, the blocking of the logistics flow required the air attacks to be coordinated over the entire length and breadth of the NVN panhandle, at all vulnerable points. This would have constricted the flow of materiel reaching Route Pack 1 so that air strikes there would have severely disrupted the supply route. In reality, however, the lack of a single manager prevented rapid adjustments in assigning sorties to the changing flow of supplies in the LOCs. As a result, the busy North Vietnamese were able to continue the flow of supplies through the porous gaps in coverage.

~~(C GDS-83)~~ COMUSSAG/7AF noted that the situation was similar in Laos, in the area where the Ho Chi Minh Trail passed to SVN. The enemy's ability to move materiel and equipment through the Laotian panhandle during the dry season was an important fact during the course of U.S. participation in the Vietnam war. Although the interdiction of this flow had been the primary USAF objective in the dry season air campaigns in Laos, the effective disruption of this resilient system could only have been achieved by a coordinated campaign using all air forces in the theater. He emphasized:127

Under single air management, reconnaissance, visual, photographic and electronic surveillance could have been more fully exploited to identify areas and periods of high-traffic density. A single air commander armed with this knowledge could have brought the full weight of effort to bear in this most lucrative segment of the North Vietnamese [and Laotian] panhandle [s].

A single manager would have made the use of all air forces in the theater far more destructive.

Impaired TACAIR Support of Linebacker Operations

~~(C GDS 83)~~ In his critique of air operations conducted in NVN, COMUSSAG/7AF pointedly noted that more effective support could have been

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given the B-52s during Linebacker II, eliminating the dangers of stereotyped air operations, had there been a single authority for tasking all U.S. aircraft.¹²⁸ During the 11-day operation in December 1972, COM7AF generally was made aware of the Navy support provided the B-52s through coordination with the Fleet Coordinating Group attached to Hq USMACV/7AF, but the details of specific TOTs, amount and location of support jamming, and planned attacks on SAM sites were rarely known. A single manager could have directed the most appropriate weapon system against a specific target at a preferred time, making the most effective use of each weapon and maximizing the suppression of the enemy threat arrayed against the B-52 force. It followed, therefore, that the suppression of enemy SAM sites should have been more effective than it had been during Linebacker II.

~~(C GDS 83)~~ The lack of unified targeting created yet another dangerous situation. Because of the fact that Red Crown control supported Navy Alpha strikes in Route Pack 6B while also supporting USAF Linebacker operations in Route Packs 5 and 6A, USAF missions were scheduled around Navy Alpha strikes. As a result, the selection of Linebacker TOTs were effectively limited to a "two or three-hour period in mid-morning and a similar period in mid-afternoon."¹²⁹ The unilateral Navy decisions on its TOTs had a significant impact in stereotyping USAF operations and, thereby, unnecessarily increasing the hazards of USAF strikes.

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~~(C GDS 83)~~ COMUSSAG/7AF assured CINCPACAF that a large number of staff personnel would not have to be added to the headquarters at NKP to assume the centralized targeting and tasking authority for all air operations in a hostile situation in Southeast Asia if a favorable decision were given on single management. It was estimated that the job could be done with an additional 50 targeting and fragging personnel. Since some of the personnel required for the targeting function could be drawn from the Fleet Coordinating Office staff already at Hq USSAG/7AF, the overall enlargement of the proposed responsibility was not expected to result in a proportional increase in headquarters personnel. General Vogt summarized:¹³⁰

In short, for a few extra people we could achieve a far more highly integrated effort, more systematic destruction of the enemy target system, significant improvement in enemy defense saturation, with a consequent reduction in friendly losses, and virtual elimination of duplication of effort throughout North Vietnam.

CINCPACAF CONCURS WITH COMUSSAG/7AF RECOMMENDATIONS

~~(C GDS 83)~~ On 9 March 1973, Hawaii time, CINCPACAF responded to General Wade's request for information and support of Hq USAF's attempt to gain unified targeting and tasking for Hq USSAG/7AF, by forwarding General

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Vogt's analysis and reinforcing it with his own views.¹³¹ Both Generals Vogt and Clay agreed that COMUSSAG/7AF should be the single targeting and tasking authority for all U.S. combat air resources. Clay strongly supported Vogt in the specific areas where single managership would have substantial impact. They were:

- Coordinated coverage in countering heavy air defenses.
- Better TACAIR support of Arc Light.
- Elimination of overlap and duplication in air operations.
- Elimination of gaps in strikes against extensive targets.
- Better utilization of weapon systems.

~~(C GDS 83)~~ In expanding the last point, CINCPACAF added that the lack of an integrated command for air circumscribed the effect that a weapon system could have in its application. Clay stressed the major premise of his argument. "For the first time in U.S. air operations in the North Vietnam heartland," he observed, "a full range of weapon systems were available." The systems and ordnance were "capable of all-weather operations, area bombing, or pinpoint bombing." Yet, the full effectiveness of these systems was degraded for a lack of a single commander for air operations.

~~(C GDS 83)~~ CINCPACAF reported, for emphasis, that in many instances "less than optimum" utilization of aircraft and ordnance occurred which, in turn, resulted in limited damage to targets bombed. General Clay cited a weaponeering analysis in supporting the need for unified tasking:¹³²

The use of B-52's or F-111's against small pinpoint targets such as power plants and Radcom [radio communications] facilities is much less productive than strikes by terminally-guided ordnance. In the case of the Hanoi AM Transmitter, Me Tri, pre-strike weaponeering indicated an expected 32 per cent probable damage for 36 B-52's on the main transmitter building; yet, eight F-4's using LGB's [laser guided bombs] provided an expected 99.6 per cent probable damage.

~~(C GDS 83)~~ CINCPACAF concluded by recommending that USSAG/7AF be retained as a joint headquarters so that there would be no implication the U.S. Army, USN, or the Marines would be placed under a unilateral USAF command. More importantly, General Clay reasoned that in emphasizing USAF's exclusive interests in the "scheduling and targeting responsibilities" for air operations, the interservice debate on doctrinal matters could be avoided. He suggested:¹³³

I would like to add that as a further tactic we should avoid being involved in a continuation of the long standing differences we have had with the Navy on the semantics of the term "operational control" versus the Navy's "in support of."

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If USSAG has scheduling and targeting responsibility, the doctrinal debate over operational control vice in support of is far less compelling than the overall concept of single management of air.

He was to expand this theme to the Air Force Chief of Staff (CSAF) in April 1973.

JOINT CHANNELS RESUME REEXAMINATION OF USSAG/7AF

~~(C GDS 83)~~ On 15 March 1973, as American prisoners of war were being released by Hanoi, the JCS requested CINCPAC and COMUSSAG to provide their recommendations on restructuring the command in SE Asia so as to improve targeting and tasking of air assets. The JCS specifically desired:¹³⁴

The manner in which targeting and tasking of all air assets is presently being accomplished and any recommended changes in targeting and tasking that could result in a more efficient and effective command structure. The response should indicate those headquarters now having targeting and tasking responsibilities, and the U.S. air assets they target and task, and the geographical areas where these responsibilities apply.

~~(C GDS 83)~~ On the same day, CINCPAC requested COMUSSAG/7AF to provide inputs to CINCPAC on the JCS task. Since the matter had been thoroughly discussed in Air Force channels, Hq USSAG/7AF's answers were both consistent and predictable. Early in April 1973, General Vogt sent his recommendations to CINCPAC. He recommended that USSAG/7AF be retained in its existing structure until the military situation in SE Asia became more stabilized and the "DRV has demonstrated their intent to conform to the provisions of the cease-fire agreement." He recommended, predictably, that the authority of COMUSSAG be expanded to include targeting and tasking "for all U.S. air assets, including SAC, Marine, and USN, in Laos, Cambodia, RVN, and Route Pack 1 of NVN." In his somewhat closely worded message, COMUSSAG assured CINCPAC that this expanded authority would "insure the most effective application of air capability in support of the ground situation in these areas."¹³⁵

~~(C GDS 83)~~ Additionally, it was proposed that COMUSSAG be designated the coordinating authority for all combat air operations in North Vietnam, the implementation of which would be through the existing Air Coordinating Committee. In his straightforward recommendation, General Vogt concluded:¹³⁶

Coordinated operations would result in maximum destruction of the enemy target system as well as saturation of his defenses with a resultant decrease in friendly losses.

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The reasoning for both retaining Hq USSAG/7AF and assigning it unified targeting and tasking was compelling. The following chapter summarizes the reasoning involved in the decision to retain Hq USSAG/7AF well beyond X plus 60 days.

SAC FORCES EXCLUDED FROM SINGLE MANAGER CONTROL

~~(S ODS 81)~~ The case for a single manager was considerably weakened by the effects of discussions focussed on a contingency plan for resuming air strikes against NVN if sufficient reason arose. The plan, called Tennis Racket, was based on the realistic assumption that the North Vietnamese would continue to "direct and support" aggression in Indochina in violation of the terms of the cease-fire agreement of January 1973. This would ultimately require U.S. forces to respond with retaliatory air strikes, using massive TACAIR and B-52 sorties against enemy targets in North Vietnam.¹³⁷

~~(S ODS 82)~~ In the midst of this planning for Tennis Racket in early 1973, Hq USAF decided to exclude SAC forces from the control of a unified targeting and tasking authority. The decision affected PACAF arguments for an air commander acquiring better control of operations. On 4 April 1973, CINCPACAF conveyed his disappointment with the USAF decision and explained the adverse effect it would have on the efforts he had undertaken for integrating air resources PACOM-wide, elaborating on them in his message to Gen John D. Ryan, Chief of Staff.¹³⁸ In his statement, General Clay noted, "The Navy has firmly opposed and probably will, at the JCS level, continue to oppose any integration of naval assets." In spite of this evident self-interest, continued Clay, CINCPAC seemed to be exhibiting a willingness to "move along in this direction" of integrated control of air. As evidence of this cautious, but nevertheless positive movement, CINCPACAF cited the fact that Admiral Gayler had directed "USSAG/7AF to be the coordinating authority for the development of the Tennis Racket plan." At the same time, General Clay warned that CINCPAC watched these events closely, particularly USAF actions connected with the assignment of SAC forces to a single air commander.

~~(S ODS 83)~~ Long-accustomed to polemical discussions on unified operational control, General Clay stressed that any relaxation of SAC's obligations by USAF would "open the door for caveat qualifications" from all of the forces assigned. The inclination to emphasize parochial interests would become stronger than an impartial motivation in which operational control of assets could be lost. The net effect, predicted Clay, would be a situation in which a theater commander, such as COMUSSAG/7AF, would have assigned only Air Force tactical forces and none from the other services. General Clay asked CSAF that further consideration be given the matter, adding that there were other ripple effects to consider.

~~(S ODS 83)~~ CINCPACAF's objective of integrating air assets under a single air commander included not only the command arrangements in SE Asia,

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but those in Korea as well. To this end, Hq PACAF had been working closely with the CINCPAC staff. It was Clay's intention to gain the acceptance of a single air commander who had targeting and timing responsibility "for all forces assigned in accomplishing the theater mission."

~~(C-005-85)~~ To make his approach more palatable, CINCPACAF explained that his proposals did not "direct or involve the command and control of the forces assigned," a matter which was left to the discretion of the respective service commanders. Moreover, the commanders would also be responsible for the "development of tactics associated with carrying out the necessary air operations." It was CINCPACAF's judgment that "the key to success for . . . a position for a single air commander" revolved about the Air Force's willingness "to participate fully in all aspects of forces assigned to . . . [carry] out the mission." The credibility of this willingness to participate fully would be, in Clay's view, impaired by releasing SAC from its obligation to participate in a single manager relationship. General Clay concluded, in his strong support of the single manager concept, that "I consider this course of action one that will make it very difficult for me supporting effectively a single air commander for theater operations."

~~(C-005-85)~~ On 6 April 1973, CSAF responded to General Clay's communication, modifying the position taken earlier by Hq USAF. He explained that the establishment of a single manager for air in SE Asia was not an end in itself but a part of a more fundamentally important objective of improved effectiveness. In delineating a policy for targeting and tasking in SE Asia which would stimulate such a purpose, General Ryan was convinced that SAC resources were so unique that they merited exclusion from the control of theater commanders under certain circumstances. PACAF was advised to adhere to the following points for air operations in SE Asia:¹³⁹

- All land-based and sea-based air assets assigned to the theater should be targeted and tasked by a central, on-scene authority.
- For tactical operations in Cambodia, Laos or SVN, SAC forces made available should be targeted and tasked by USSAG/7AF.
- For air operations in NVN, SAC forces should be properly excluded from USSAG/7AF's targeting and tasking authority and managed in a manner which exploited their unique attributes and capabilities.

CSAF's guidance essentially recapitulated the development of unified management in SE Asia to that date and acknowledged COMUSSAG/7AF's earlier conclusion that a de facto single manager for air already existed in Cambodia, Laos, SVN, and Route Package 1.

~~(C-005-85)~~ CSAF requested that PACAF's recommendations to CINCPAC be consistent with this policy guidance. Since it was a change from Hq USAF's earlier position, sent to PACAF and USSAG/7AF on 23 February, the message was retransmitted to General Vogt with a request suggesting that it would be helpful if CSAF's views were incorporated into COMUSSAG/7AF's

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recommendations to CINCPAC. On 9 April, Hq USSAG/7AF provided its recommendations to CINCPAC on both the matter of its existence and command authority. USSAG/7AF was recommended for retention for an additional 12 months and for targeting and tasking authority in SVN, Laos, Cambodia, and Route Pack 1.

~~(S GDS 83)~~ This change was embodied in the Tennis Racket plan which was modified in the months following. On 20 April 1973, CINCPAC requested that the JCS accept and approve the plan since it would be refined, participants could initiate changes, and it had the potential for execution. SAC had indicated earlier in April that it would be necessary for Tennis Racket to include its recommended changes on the planned employment of B-52s. By 24 April 1973, when SAC provided CINCPAC with data on strike force assignment, timing and routing, and targets, it was clear that SAC would task and target independently for Tennis Racket, a plan for which COMUSSAG/7AF remained the coordinating authority.¹⁴⁰ By 23 April 1974, the plan specified that the established mechanism of the Fleet Coordinating Group and SAC ADVON at Hq USSAG/7AF would be used for integrating the planning and employment of forces belonging to Seventh Air Force, the Seventh Fleet, and Eighth Air Force. If the plan was executed, COMUSSAG/7AF retained the right to decide on initial launch and subsequent operations. CINCSAC was to provide "B-52 strikes as requested by and coordinated with COMUSSAG/7AF."¹⁴¹

CINCPAC RECOMMENDS NO CHANGE IN TARGETING & TASKING

~~(S GDS 83)~~ In response to a JCS query on 11 September 1973 for information on specific targeting and tasking procedures for air operations in SE Asia, CINCPAC described the rather complicated system used in delegating responsibilities to PACAF, PACFLT, and USSAG/7AF and the coordination used in SAC's independent targeting, but did not--as might be expected--recommend any changes be instituted.¹⁴² CINCPAC explained, in his message of 14 September 1973, that targeting priorities were assigned by CINCPAC in accordance with the directions provided by the CJCS.

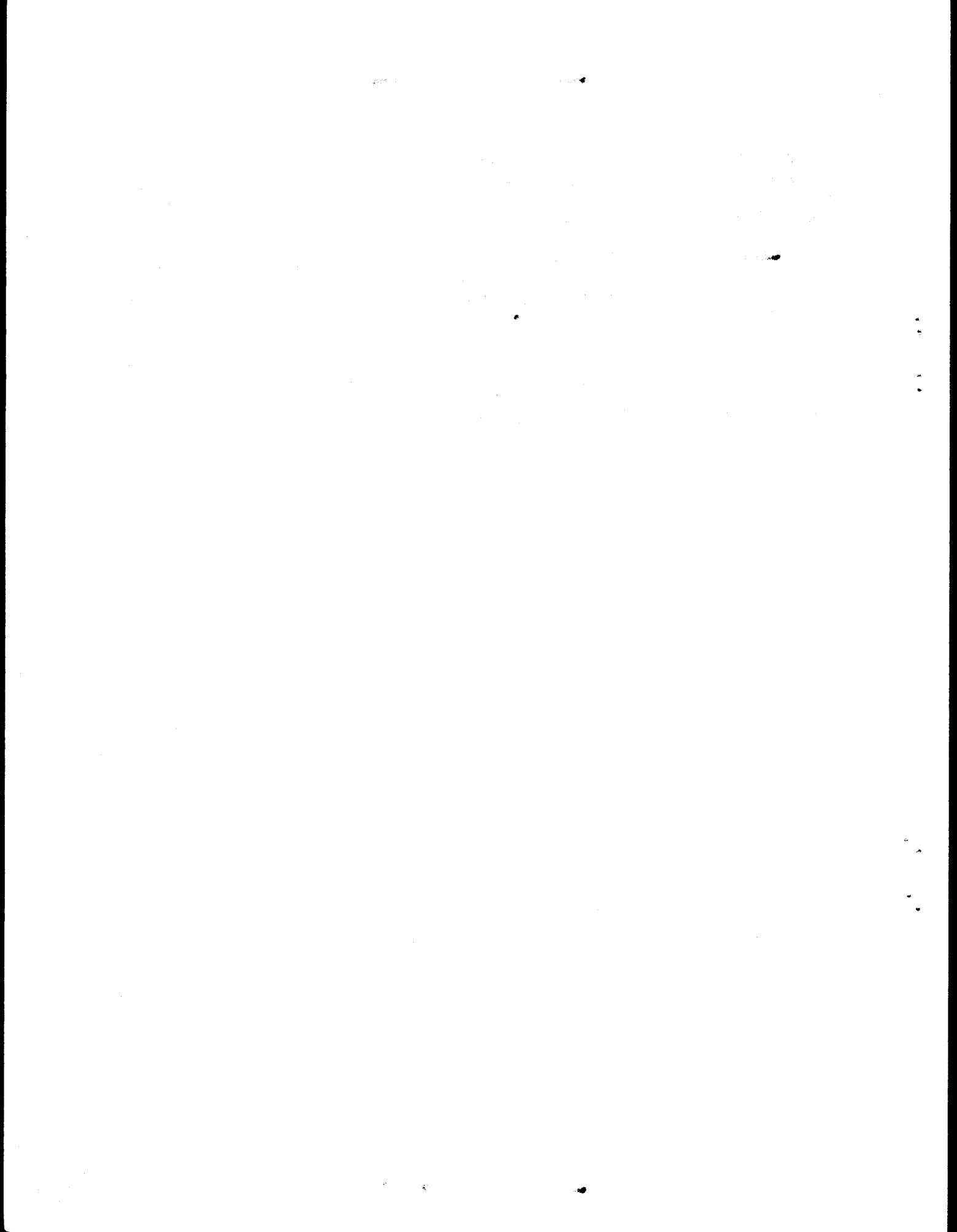
~~(S GDS 83)~~ For air strikes in North Vietnam, the CINCPAC Joint Targeting Committee established the CINCPAC target list in coordination with CINCUSARPAC, CINCPACAF, and CINCPACFLT. In the PACAF operating areas, Route Packages 1, 5, and 6A, COMUSSAG/7AF selected targets appropriate for the forces available. In Route Packages 2, 3, 4, and 6B, the PACFLT operating area, CINCPACFLT supported operations through the Fleet Coordinating Group located with USSAG/7AF. COMUSSAG/7AF had the responsibility for selecting targets in Laos and Cambodia, his judgment based on current intelligence, and either the approval or instruction of CINCPAC. COMUSSAG/7AF was also delegated targeting authority for South Vietnam in contingency plans.

~~(S GDS 83)~~ CINCPAC also explained the limits placed on his subordinate command. Hq USSAG/7AF exercised operational control and directly tasked forces only when they were assigned to the headquarters. Since the command functioned largely in contingencies and combat situations, COMUSSAG/7AF,

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in reality, commanded few forces after 15 August 1973. CINCPAC had delegated, however, the responsibility for issuing frag orders to COMUSSAG/7AF for certain support forces such as Marine Air Group 13 and operational control of the 7th Radio Research Field Station at Ramasun, Thailand.

~~(G-8DS-83)~~ CINCPAC also explained that SAC and CINCPACFLT forces operated independently of Hq USSAG/7AF in the conduct of air strikes; COMUSSAG/7AF did not retain operational control of either SAC or CINCPACFLT air elements. CINCSAC was responsible for tasking SAC forces and coordinating his plans and operations with both COMUSSAG/7AF and CINCPACFLT through SAC ADVON located at Hq USSAG/7AF. CINCPACFLT, in turn, tasked naval forces and coordinated its operations by means of "message traffic, voice communications, and the Fleet Coordinating Group located at Headquarters USSAG/7AF."¹⁴³ These procedures were not to change during the life of the "multi-service integrated" headquarters.



IV. USSAG/7AF AFTER DRAWDOWN IN SOUTH VIETNAM (1973-74)

U.S. AIR FORCE RATIONALE FOR RETAINING USSAG/7AF

~~(S GDS 83)~~ The discussions centering about the question of whether to disestablish, retain, or modify USSAG/7AF began at the same time the issue of unified tasking and targeting for air operations arose. Immediately following the JCS tasking of CINCPAC on 15 March 1973 for resolving the future of Hq USSAG/7AF, CINCPAC asked COMUSSAG/7AF to provide his recommendations on the subject.¹⁴⁴ These near-real-time communications and exchanges of ideas in joint command channels were followed by discussions in the USAF chain of command which pursued the responsibilities of the component service. On 21 March 1973, Hq PACAF informed Hq 7AF of the Air Staff arguments for retaining the headquarters at NKP.¹⁴⁵

~~(S GDS 83)~~ Maj Gen Winton W. Marshall, Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans (DCS/Plans), Hq PACAF, explained to Maj Gen Carlos M. Talbott, Chief of Staff, Hq 7AF, on 21 March 1973, the substance of the Air Staff's recommendations. They were contained in an Air Staff paper which stated:¹⁴⁶

■ The Air Force should support the retention of Hq USSAG/7AF in which the authority of the commander is broadened to include targeting and tasking for all U.S. combat air assets in all combat operations in Laos, Cambodia, RVN, and NVN.

■ COMUSSAG/7AF should remain a four-star billet with adjustment to a three-star position when a nine squadron force was attained. This could be reduced further in proportion to decreased activities and force levels.

■ The retention of USSAG/7AF for an additional six to nine months appeared to be warranted.

The Air Staff reasoned that the JCS would agree to retain USSAG/7AF as it was constituted "as long as there is a need to maintain a significant combat air capability in Southeast Asia." It followed, then, that USSAG/7AF would be justified at the force levels and with the activities pursued in March 1973. Consistent with its earlier arguments on the need for a single manager for air operations, the Air Staff noted, moreover, that a "more efficient and effective command structure would result if COMUSSAG/7AF were given targeting and tasking authority."

~~(S GDS 83)~~ At the same time, it was recognized that the JCS review of command arrangements in SE Asia could well result in lowered activities and responsibilities in combat air operations for USSAG/7AF, based on the possibility that higher authority could decide to reduce combat air resources. Under such circumstances, reasoned the Air Staff, the retention of USSAG/7AF in a "constrained combat air role would not be a

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desirable alternative" and the Air Force was urged to pursue a unilateral air division structure under 13AF.¹⁴⁷

~~(S 888 88)~~ Continuing its analysis, the Air Staff cited seven major reasons for retaining Hq USSAG/7AF:¹⁴⁸

- Contingency planning by USSAG/7AF would be required beyond X plus 60. This was based on the planning assumption approved by the President that 7,900 combined USAF/Navy TACAIR/B-52 sorties per month would be required on a 24-hour notice or 23,400 combined sorties per month on a 15-day notice.

- The command function for DAO would continue beyond X plus 60. Because of the size of DAO and its logistics, operations and intelligence functions, the most responsive command and supervision could be provided by COMUSSAG/7AF.

- JCRC was expected to become more active in resolving the status of the missing in action with high activity during the following 12 months. Since USSAG/7AF was colocated with JCRC, the most responsive command and coordination of support could be provided.

- X plus 60 (28 March 1973) was too soon to make an "adequate determination of Southeast Asia cease-fire effectiveness" because of the slow pace of Joint Military Commission (JMC) and International Commission of Control and Supervision (ICCS) activities. Moreover, the effectiveness of the cease-fire in Laos could not be determined during that time.

- The Royal Thai Government was not expected to change its generally favorable attitude toward the retention of programmed forces and organizations in Thailand--at least for the next several months.

- There were "strategic considerations" which favored the retention of USSAG/7AF, including the value of the headquarters as a deterrence against NVN cease-fire violations, as evidence to the allies of U.S. commitments, and as assurance to both the RVN and NVN of unchanging U.S. resolve. Also important, was Dr. Kissinger's "assessment that the NVN potential for offensive action [was] more likely in 12 months" than during the period X plus 60.

- The joint nature of residual U.S. forces and activities.

These were the main points of the Air Force rationale for retaining Hq USSAG/7AF; they formed the outlines of the discussions coordinated by Hq PACAF to insure that a consistent position was presented to joint channels. It is interesting to note that while these discussions were taking place in the Air Force chain of command, the soundness of the arguments would not have found many criticisms elsewhere.

~~(S 888 88)~~ On 9 April 1973, COMUSSAG/7AF recommended to CINCPAC that the multi-service, integrated staff headquarters at NKP be retained:¹⁴⁹

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. . . in its present structure until the military situation has stabilized and DRV has demonstrated their intent to conform to the provisions of the cease-fire agreement. [The] current situation suggests that this will be at least X plus 9-12 months.

General Vogt stressed that evaluated intelligence indicated the North Vietnamese had, since the cease-fire, developed the capability to resume full-scale hostilities in the Republic of Vietnam and Laos. By way of emphasis, COMUSSAG/7AF pointed out that the NVN build-up of a major base at Khe Sanh in the northern part of South Vietnam convincingly demonstrated enemy intentions of pursuing hostilities in South Vietnam. Ingesting the substance of the Air Staff recommendations for retaining Hq USSAG/7AF, COMUSSAG/7AF transformed the basic arguments into the joint command's view of functions. He outlined seven specific advantages for CINCPAC if he would retain the joint headquarters for one year beyond X plus 60: 150

- The presence of Hq USSAG/7AF in the heart of SE Asia with its assigned forces constituted an active military deterrent to Hanoi, on the one hand, while it symbolized U.S. resolve which could not be taken lightly, on the other.

- The "visible presence of USSAG/7AF" tended to support U.S. statements of commitment to Asian allies and to reinforce their confidence.

- A more reasonable time period would be provided for allowing the political/military situation to stabilize after the exchange of prisoners and after the withdrawal of U.S. forces from the RVN, for assessing the effectiveness of the cease-fire in Laos, and for maintaining a real capability for resuming combat operations to offset the continued NVN violations of the cease-fire.

- A joint and responsive command relationship would "be retained while the conditions in Southeast Asia remained turbulent and uncertain." Any fragmentation of responsibilities at the time would adversely affect future military operations.

- In the event that combat operations were resumed, the manpower necessary for the effective management of "committed military resources" would be available.

- Since the magnitude of the JCRC mission was yet to be determined, this assessment could be best conducted by the existing headquarters and command relationships.

- The continued coordination between USSAG/7AF and the RVNAF JGS through the DAO Saigon clearly showed the fact that U.S. support existed, provided "an alternative means of monitoring security assistance operations," and also provided an avenue for any future, large-scale, combined operations.

~~(S-883-83)~~ In April 1973, as it continued to be throughout the following year, no cease-fire was agreed upon in Cambodia. Fighting between the VC/NVA and the RVNAF forces continued in South Vietnam.

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Figure 4. Nakhon Phanom RTAFB, Thailand (c. 1972). The Mekong River is located at the top of the photo. Arrow is location of USSAG/7AF.(U)

COMUSSAG/7AF assessed the ground situation in all of SE Asia as very unstable with the threat to friendly forces in Laos, Cambodia, and the RVN continuing unabated. For practical purposes then, the joint headquarters "should be retained at NKP to maintain the capability to resume an effective air campaign in Laos, Cambodia, RVN, and NVN and to conduct JCRC operations." General Vogt suggested that the need for Hq USSAG/7AF again be reviewed when there were more reasonable assurances that the political-military situation in SE Asia was stabilizing.

USSAG/7AF UNALTERED IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING X PLUS 60

~~(S 8D3 83)~~ Although the JCS had considered Hq USSAG/7AF as a transitional organization from its inception, it withheld any action altering the responsibilities of the NKP headquarters when it reviewed the discussions and recommendations regarding command arrangements in SE Asia, following the U.S. drawdown from South Vietnam.¹⁵¹ While the military services discussed the need for Hq USSAG/7AF during the final quarter of Fiscal Year 1973, Congress debated and passed legislation which was to profoundly affect U.S. military operations in SE Asia.

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TERMINATION OF FUNDING FOR COMBAT OPERATIONS IN SE ASIA

(U) The hue and cry raised in the United States against the continuation of U.S. air strikes in Cambodia was transformed into legislation which terminated all funding of acts of force by the United States in SE Asia on 15 August 1973. The Congress perceived that the President could, without too much difficulty, order the air forces to continue bombing, even without waiting for a more satisfactory resolution of the constitutional issues raised by the Nixon Administration's interpretations on how the Paris Agreement was being enforced.* Congressional sentiment grew strong for an absolute cut-off of funds for combat operations in SE Asia; this was expressed in large majority votes in committees and in both Houses on measures dealing with war-related funds.¹⁵² With general agreement in Congress on what should be done, it remained only to determine when it should be done.

(U) The debate--which was both skillful and learned--centered about selecting the appropriate amendment to the Second Supplemental Appropriations Act of 1973, with voting narrowly defeating the Eagleton amendment which would have terminated combat operations on 30 June 1973. In negotiations between the Executive Branch and the Congress, a compromise was reached with the substitution, following even more debate, of the Fulbright amendment. The new amendment allowed combat operations to continue until 15 August which, it was reasoned, would allow the Nixon Administration a reasonable period of time for pursuing negotiations with the Communists. The Second Supplemental Appropriations Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-50) with the Fulbright amendment (Section 307) was approved on 1 July 1973.¹⁵³ The restrictive provisions of this law were attached to appropriations acts which followed the supplemental act. The Fulbright amendment (Title III, Section 307) specified:

None of the funds herein appropriated under this Act may be expended to support directly or indirectly combat activities in or over Cambodia, Laos, North Vietnam and South Vietnam or off the shores of Cambodia, Laos, North Vietnam and South Vietnam by United States forces, and after August 15, 1973, no other funds heretofore appropriated under any Act may be expended for such purpose.

The passage of this law at the beginning of the new fiscal year was the signal for all elements of the Department of Defense to begin adjusting to the termination of combat operations.

(U) The prohibitions of the Fulbright amendment were extended to cover all new appropriations for the Departments of State and Defense for

*Refer to the last few pages of Chapter I for this discussion.

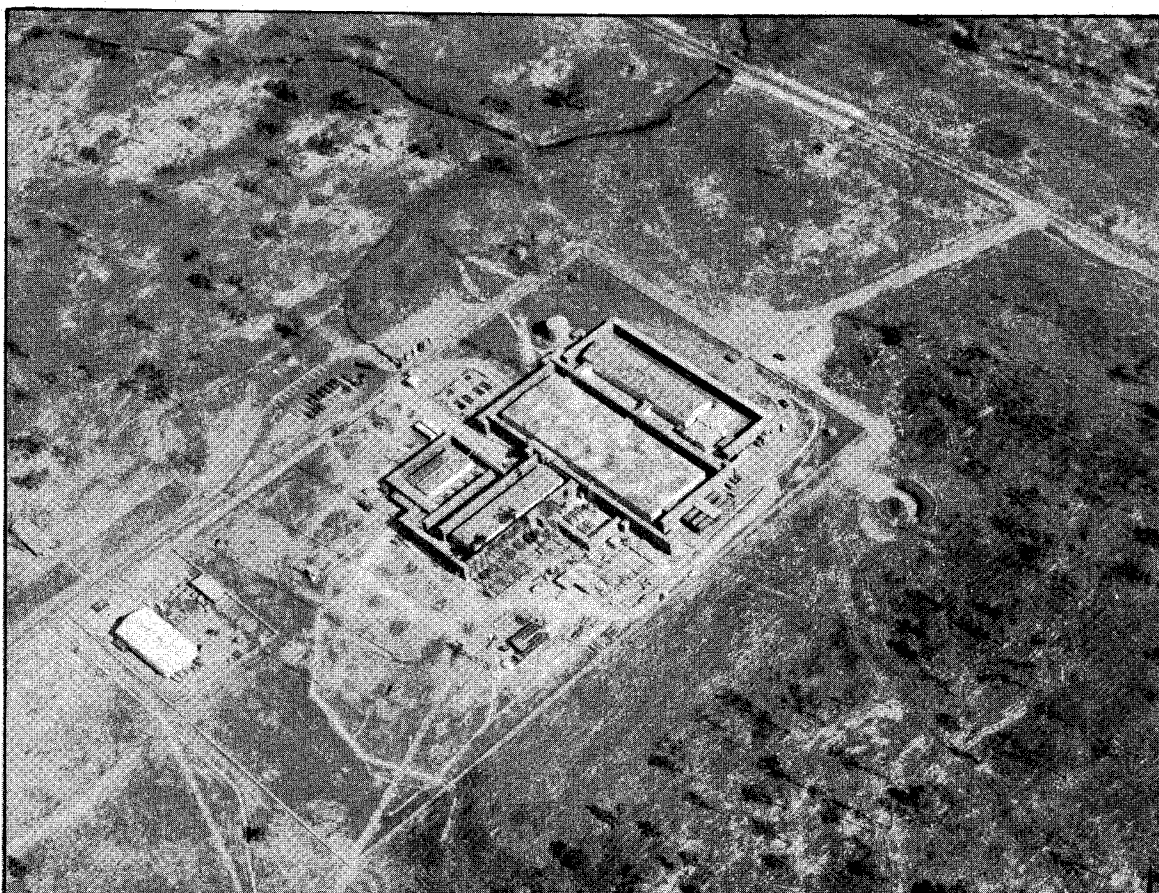
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Figure 5. The site of Task Force Alpha (TFA) at Nakhon Phanom RTAFB. TFA was inactivated on 31 December 1972. These facilities were then used by Hq USSAG/7AF from 10 February 1972 until its inactivation on 30 June 1975. (U)

the new fiscal year. The Continuing Resolution Authority for Fiscal Year 1973 (Public Law 93-52) enacted on 1 July 1973; the Department of State Appropriations Authorization Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-126) enacted on 18 October 1973; and the DOD Appropriation Authorization Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-155) approved on 16 November 1973 all contained prohibitions on the use of funds by U.S. military forces in "Hostilities in or over or from off the shores of North Vietnam, South Vietnam, Laos, or Cambodia."¹⁵⁴

DOD AUTHORIZED OPERATIONS IN LAOS & CAMBODIA AFTER 15 AUGUST 1973

~~(C-003-81)~~ On 4 July 1973, the Chief, Military Equipment Delivery Team, Cambodia (MEDTC), requested an interpretation of the amendment

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generally prohibiting U.S. military activity in or over Indochina after 15 August 1973.¹⁵⁵ The JCS had provided interim guidance on 6 July 1973 on the types of air operations allowable over Cambodia and Laos after 14 August 1973. A week later, the Department of State provided a listing of military, economic, and diplomatic assistance which the United States was prepared to undertake to assist the Khmer Republic before and after 15 August 1973 and included guidance on the nature of U.S. assistance in airlifts. On 18 July 1973, CINCPAC also requested information on air activities authorized after 15 August 1973.

~~(S 885-81)~~ In clarifying earlier discussions of the impact of Public Law 93-155, the SecDef informed the JCS and others on 3 August 1973 of specific activities which were prohibited in Cambodia and Laos after 14 August 1973. They were:¹⁵⁶

- Bombing, strafing, rocketing or other expenditures of ordnance.
- Forward air controller operations.
- Armed reconnaissance.
- Helicopter gunship operations.
- Comparable hostile actions by U.S. ground and naval forces directly engaged as American units against the enemy.
- Activities by individuals in support of indigenous forces, including artillery fire control and observation, FAC, advisers to Khmer military forces, and combat advisers to Royal Lao Government forces.
- Transport of supplies or military equipment when there is serious risk to the aircraft and crew or as an adjunct to combat activities.

~~(S 885-81)~~ The Secretary of Defense also identified noncombat air operations, if otherwise authorized by Executive authority, which were permitted by this statute after 14 August 1973 in Cambodia and Laos, if carried out by unarmed aircraft, "unescorted by armed aircraft." They were:¹⁵⁷

- Reconnaissance flights.
- Administrative flights in connection with operations of the Joint Casualty Resolution Center and other noncombat personnel.
- Airlift, including air drop of military assistance items and humanitarian supplies to points of entry and to base areas except where serious risk to the aircraft and crew was involved such as airlift to base areas where forces are in direct contact.
- In-country movement of military assistance items and supplies to base areas, including landing and air drops, provided that it did not include operations where serious risk to the aircraft and crews was involved, such as movement to base areas where forces were in direct contact.

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■ Emergency airlift and airdropping of humanitarian supplies such as food and medicines at any location in Cambodia under the control of Khmer Republic and at any location in Laos under the control of the Royal Lao Government, except where serious risk to the aircraft and crew was involved, if other means such as indigenous forces or civilian organizations or civilian contractors were not reasonably available.

Clearly, the SecDef held that airlift, administrative, and reconnaissance operations could be conducted by unarmed aircraft over both Laos and Cambodia after 15 August 1973.

(U) The DOD interpretation of authorized air operations over the Khmer Republic after 15 August 1973 was again reaffirmed on at least two occasions during 1974. On 26 June 1974, Secretary Schlesinger was asked by Senator Fulbright in a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing if the providing of photographic intelligence to the Khmer and South Vietnamese armed forces was not a "violation of the intent of Congress in terminating authority for the use of U.S. Armed Forces in Indochina and of the Paris Agreement."¹⁵⁸ He answered that reconnaissance flights over Cambodia were not a violation of either. In addition, the SecDef informed Fulbright that the U.S. shared intelligence gathered from photographic sources with "certain allied nations." The Secretary explained the procedure by which the information was gathered and passed to the Cambodians:¹⁵⁹

Photography of Cambodia taken by RF-4s flying out of Udorn, Thailand, is processed and analyzed by photo interpreters who identify items of intelligence interest. This may be the upgrading of a road network or the establishment of a POL distribution point by the enemy. The photography, annotated to identify the [items of intelligence] interest and grid coordinates, is forwarded to Phnom Penh where it is passed to the Cambodian Armed Forces (FANK). Instances of an absence of enemy activity are similarly passed on to FANK. The judgment of what use should be made of the intelligence and in what priority is left to FANK, who are quite capable of making those decisions.

(U) Later, on 22 November 1974, the DOD answered a charge by John Burgess in a Washington Post article, datelined Bangkok, Thailand, that U.S. military analysts were making target recommendations for bombing in Cambodia for the military command in Phnom Penh.¹⁶⁰ These target recommendations, based on aerial reconnaissance flights conducted several times daily by RF-4s of the 432d Tactical Fighter Wing stationed at Udorn, RTAFB, were, in his judgment, in "apparent violation" of the Congressional legislation prohibiting a direct U.S. military role in Cambodia. The answering DOD press announcement pointed out that the unarmed reconnaissance flights had been justified more than a year previously by high DOD officials including the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, and the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for

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Public Affairs, Maj Gen Daniel James, Jr. Moorer, in his appearance in Congress on 3 August 1973, had expressed the view that unarmed reconnaissance flights over Cambodia were justified because they were not combat activities and because there was a need to know what the enemy was doing. On 16 August 1973, James announced that some unarmed reconnaissance flights were being made over Cambodia. Since no further questions were raised at press conferences on 25 November 1974 at either the DOD or the Department of State, the Secretary of Defense thought that the matter was closed.¹⁶¹

USSAG/7AF AT TERMINATION OF COMBAT OPERATIONS

~~(C GDS 01)~~ The termination of funding for combat operations in SE Asia compelled the U.S. military services to make adjustments in their command apparatus, particularly with respect to Hq USSAG/7AF, so that policy objectives for the area could be best supported. In U.S. Air Force channels, Hq USAF led off the restructuring discussions in July 1973, identifying for CINCPACAF a need to "examine post-SEA beddown of strategic forces in the Pacific area."¹⁶² At the same time, USAF described the "tenor of on-going Washington level discussions and assumptions associated with post-SEA unit/basing requirements." In his message of 2 August 1973, CSAF requested PACAF provide plans for the types of forces selected and the rationale for the bases selected along with an assessment of "any requirement for a Thailand based command element."

~~(C GDS 01)~~ CSAF predicted that the recent limitations imposed on U.S. military activity in SE Asia by legislation and by Department of State policy statements that U.S. forces should be "scaled down" and lower in profile foretold, realistically, a phase-down to peacetime arrangements.¹⁶³ Since the basic JCS plan which created USSAG/7AF designed it as an interim organization, CSAF reasoned, it was anticipated that "transitional command arrangements" would be studied. This would accompany lower force levels, reduced base requirements, and redefined tasks for residual forces.

~~(C GDS 01)~~ CINCPAC, for his part, defined the changed nature of U.S. military responsibilities in SE Asia. In a message transmitted to COMUSSAG/7AF, CINCPACFLT, CINCPACAF, and CINCUSARPAC while airborne between Washington D.C. and Hawaii on 2 August 1973, Admiral Gayler informed his subordinate commanders that he had been personally instructed by the SecDef on the background and desired interpretation of U.S. military activities in Laos and Cambodia after 15 August 1973.¹⁶⁴ He also revealed how closely the Secretaries of Defense and State worked together in these matters. For example, the "operative language" of the SecDef's 2 August 1973 message had been personally drafted by Dr. Kissinger.

~~(C GDS 01)~~ Admiral Gayler stressed that a "distinction was to be drawn between supply to Khmer Government entities" which could be supported,

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"even if colocated with troops or in isolated enclaves," and field support of troops which was not permissible. Moreover, all support rendered was "to be cast in [the] light of fulfillment of MAP obligations to [the] Khmer Government." He reiterated that no authority was granted to react to attacks on U.S. aircraft. Reducing the possibilities of error even further, he added that any "appreciable risk" which might result in U.S. casualties, shootdown, or loss was to be avoided. Admiral Gayler advised his commands that their actions "must tread a narrow and legalistic knife edge" in which their judgment was vitally important. If there was any doubt about these issues, subordinate commanders were instructed to convey them quickly to CINCPAC for resolution.

~~(C-005-81)~~ In stimulating the Air Force discussions on command arrangements in SE Asia, CINCPACAF informed COM7AF, General Vogt, and COM13AF, Lt Gen William G. Moore, Jr., on 9 August of PACAF's preferred command arrangements in Thailand after 15 August.¹⁶⁵ CINCPACAF explained that these tentative arrangements were being prepared to answer the Air Staff's request for PACAF's views on command arrangements in SE Asia during the transitional period between 15 August and such time as the post-SE Asia posture portrayed in PD 75-2 was attained. PACAF's tentative input had incorporated earlier SecDef guidance on combat sortie capabilities through FY75; consideration had also been given to the actual forces required to be in-place and the capability needed to surge to levels established by the SecDef. Hq PACAF also pointed out that its recommendations had also incorporated the planning responsibilities which would utilize these forces and capabilities.

~~(C-006-81)~~ General Clay decided that "as long as USAF TACAIR, U.S. Navy, and SAC forces remain committed to resumption of combat on short notice, it appears a joint headquarters is required."¹⁶⁶ This proved to be one of the compelling reasons for continuing the life of USSAG/7AF. Clay reasoned pragmatically that it would be "unlikely that CINCPAC and the other services would support a unilateral Air Force headquarters with joint responsibilities." In other realistic terms, CINCPACAF did not think it advisable to "seek unilateral responsibility for the total air effort under current guidance" when considering its budgeting and political impact.

~~(C-006-81)~~ Basically, Hq PACAF concurred with the post-SEA posture for Thailand as it was projected in PD 75-2.¹⁶⁷ This reduced the number of bases in Thailand to U-Tapao Royal Thai Navy Airfield (RTNAF) as the main operating base for tactical and reconnaissance forces and support forces for other special activity sites as required. Under this arrangement, reasoned CINCPACAF, command and control of the base and sites could be exercised by Hq 13AF from Clark AB. As a result, there would be no need for a Thai-based command element after the completion of force redeployments and base closures programmed before and during FY1/76. Hq USSAG/7AF could not be justified beyond FY75. CINCPACAF was unaware of the projected location for JCRC following the closure of NKP, but

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guessed that the basing for air support should be provided by the bases scheduled to remain in FY1/76--either Don Muang or U-Tapao. Another alternative was in contracting for air support at other Thai bases for JCRC.

~~(C GDS 83)~~ The proposed PACAF response to CSAF emphasized guidance from the SecDef as criteria for the sizing and make-up of the headquarters, suggesting the retention of USSAG/7AF until the scope of responsibilities levied on the multi-service headquarters was reduced.¹⁶⁸ CINCPACAF thought that the type, size, and location of the transitional headquarters would be influenced, to some extent, by the residual force posture and the political visibility required in Thailand at the time. In addition, Clay asserted that the joint service responsibilities required at least a three-star COMUSSAG/7AF, an authorization change which was recommended to be made effective 1 October 1973.¹⁶⁹ Because of the continuing need "for liaison with the Navy, SAC, and Allied forces, further reduction below three-star rank" was not recommended until USSAG/7AF was dis-established.

~~(C GDS 83)~~ PACAF's proposal did not discuss the nature of changes for the command and control apparatus when USSAG/7AF became disestablished, leaving the alternatives as either 13 ADVON or an air division under unilateral 13AF command and control. With some minor modifications, both General Vogt and Lt Gen Moore concurred with CINCPACAF's recommendations. Thirteenth Air Force believed that an ADVON would "provide the requisite command structure when tasking" of USSAG/7AF was cancelled or reduced. However, the PACAF message to CSAF deleted the recommended reduction in grade of the four-star billet at USSAG/7AF.¹⁷⁰

~~(C GDS 83)~~ Contemporaneously with these events, the JCS requested, on 9 August 1973, that CINCPAC make his recommendations on whether to retain or disestablish USSAG/7AF and on targeting and tasking procedures in SE Asia.¹⁷¹ The points of this discussion were also transmitted to CINCPAC's subordinate commands. The commander most directly affected, COMUSSAG/7AF, responded on 24 August 1973, arguing persuasively for retention.¹⁷²

COMUSSAG/7AF Urges Retention of NKP Headquarters

~~(C GDS 83)~~ General Vogt maintained that "it would severely compromise the current political/military position of U.S. allies in SEA to dis-establish, modify USSAG/7AF or prematurely redeploy the augmentation forces."¹⁷³ His position was based on a realistic appraisal of the threat posed by Communist forces and an assessment of the effect which USSAG/7AF had upon friendly countries, particularly as a means of bolstering their national security. The Commander of the NKP headquarters warned that Vietnam cease-fire violations remained conspicuously high and that the Communists were continuing activity in many areas. Intelligence

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analysts cautioned him, explained COMUSSAG/7AF, that the Communist build-up of new roads, pipelines, airfields, land line communications, fresh numbers of tanks, long range artillery, anti-aircraft weaponry and stockpiling of resources was "ominous." Intelligence had deduced that a complete resupply of the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) had taken place, allowing the Communists a capability to "support country-wide ~ offensive operations at the 1972 offensive levels for 13 to 18 months." In view of this threat analysis, COMUSSAG/7AF concluded that a reduction or modification of the headquarters was not prudent.

~~(C GDS 83)~~ USSAG/7AF planners reminded their commander that the drawdown plans for Thailand specified that a capability be retained for resuming military operations on a surge basis through FY75.¹⁷⁴ As a result, USSAG/7AF argued for the retention of the headquarters even though planned forces would be reduced during the period:

It would significantly lengthen the time required to re-establish a unified-force command and control structure if this headquarters is deactivated/reduced in the immediate future. Effective, efficient, multi-component command and control must be retained for unimpaired, timely employment of surge forces.

Since Hq USSAG/7AF had controlled the air war in SE Asia since becoming operational in February 1973, it could readily argue that a "complete, joint component combat direction and planning center" was currently in existence with proven experience. In low-keyed terminology, USSAG/7AF pointed out that "well established communications lines for integrated theater operations" had been proven and refined, particularly in timely responses to the Khmer Government's request "for active military assistance in the defense of Phnom Penh." There were other reasons as well.

~~(C GDS 83)~~ The manner in which a complex array of forces were integrated to pursue military operations which supported U.S. policy objectives in Indochina was again explained for the benefit of higher echelons.¹⁷⁵ General Vogt, more than any other military member of diplomatic missions in SE Asia, could argue that Hq USSAG/7AF was a recognized symbol of U.S. determination to support Cambodia, Laos, and South Vietnam, basing his appraisal on personal rapport with the military and political leaders of the countries extending over a period of 17 months. Simply stated, the existence of the headquarters gave substance to the credibility of publicized U.S. commitments to SE Asian countries. The influence of a major military headquarters on the pursuit of foreign policy was recognized by the U.S. Diplomatic Mission to Thailand and is commented upon in the following chapter.

~~(C GDS 83)~~ In purely military matters, contingency plans drawn up to support various SE Asian countries had been developed as a joint component function, using skilled personnel from all services.¹⁷⁶ It was apparent, as a result, that the elimination or reduction of Hq USSAG/7AF

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would seriously impair the "precision reaction of all components on a surge basis" which would otherwise be possible. The headquarters was also providing operational control and support of chartered JCRC operations in SE Asia; the military expertise of the headquarters was also relied upon to support the diminishing advisory resources of USDAO, Saigon.

~~(C-DBS-83)~~ In summary, COMUSSAG/7AF urged that future planning be based on enemy capabilities "rather than on possible erroneous evaluations of the enemy's near-term intent."¹⁷⁷ Since the NVA long range objectives had not changed, the Thailand based forces were recommended to be retained "for the immediate future to provide a credible deterrent" and a clear signal of continued U.S. resolve to pursue its commitments in the area. General Vogt maintained that force reductions should be "protracted and gradual, determined by events" and instituted only under conditions of improved military situations. In conclusion, USSAG/7AF was recommended to be retained in its existing framework with "full authority for targeting and tasking" to insure that the well-defined, proven chain of command could pursue its military objectives. COMUSSAG/7AF was supported in his recommendations by CINCPACAF on 29 August 1973.

CINCPACAF Also Urges Retention of USSAG/7AF

~~(C-DBS-83)~~ In a lengthy message transmitted to CINCPAC on 29 August 1973, CINCPACAF conveyed the main points of his earlier discussions with General Vogt and Lt Gen Moore on the disposition of Hq USSAG/7AF. In the context of still-remaining USAF responsibilities, he urged:¹⁷⁸

USSAG/7AF should be retained to coordinate joint operations as long as USAF TACAIR, U.S. Navy, and SAC forces remain committed to resumption of combat on short notice. When reduced tasking permits disestablishment of USSAG/7AF, 13AF should assume full command responsibility for USAF forces in SEA through either 13AF ADVON or a Thailand based air division. The type, size and location of the transitional headquarters will depend on the residual force posture, assigned tasks and political visibility required in Thailand at that time.

~~(C-DBS-83)~~ On the same day, but in a separate message in Air Force channels, General Clay reported to General George S. Brown, CSAF, his agreement with General Vogt's recommendation that the streamlining of command arrangements in SE Asia was important in considering the future of USSAG/7AF.¹⁷⁹ Repeating his rationale to CINCPAC, Clay explained that so long as the Air Force had a "requirement to plan for the resumption of joint combat operations on short notice" a joint planning headquarters in Thailand was necessary to coordinate USAF, Navy, Marine, and SAC operations. Moreover, General Clay held that until the Air Force could gain a clearer understanding of the future direction "of national policy in SEA," the retention of USSAG/7AF was desirable.

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~~(S GDS 81)~~ On the other hand, General Clay could see little value in retaining Hq 7AF as a separate entity.¹⁸⁰ He explained that the existing "unilateral Air Force command lines from PACAF through 13AF to 13AF ADVON" were adequate to manage USAF resources and provide a "workable framework for future drawdown planning." In CINCPACAF's view, the inactivation of 7AF was a logical conclusion "if political considerations" permitted such action. Thirteenth Air Force ADVON was deemed necessary until the end of Phase II, when 13AF would exercise direct control of post-SE Asia forces in Thailand.

~~(S GDS 81)~~ CINCPACAF's recommendations to General Brown included the consideration that COMUSSAG/7AF could be reduced to a three-star rank, retained by the Air Force as the "predominant force in-country." A three-star rank was necessary to insure that the Air Force possessed sufficient prestige and authority to effectively coordinate the functions of the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, SAC, and allied forces. The position of COMUSSAG/7AF became three star when Lt Gen John J. Burns replaced Gen Timonthy F. O'Keefe on 1 September 1974. CINCPACAF emphasized the necessity of clearly defining the terms of reference so that COMUSSAG/7AF had the authority to assume operational control of required forces if combat operations were resumed. General Clay concurred with General Vogt's conclusion that "it would be desirable to reduce USAF presence in Bangkok" in the future. In this respect, the re-establishment of Operation Handclasp at Clark AB appeared to "offer the best means of reducing the visibility of senior military personnel in the Bangkok area."

USARPAC Recommends Later Disestablishment of
USSAG/7AF and Justifies Retention of MACTHAI

~~(S GDS 83)~~ In a recommendation which emphasized its component interests, CINCUSARPAC, on 28 August 1973, urged the abolishment of Hq USSAG/7AF at the end of FY75, while providing a lengthy explanation of why USMACTHAI and U.S. Army Support Command, Thailand (USARSUPTHAI) should be retained in the interim.¹⁸¹ Apparently, the Army component command had a realistic view of Communist intentions in Indochina and advised the necessity of retaining USSAG/7AF beyond X plus six months. At the same time, it was important to keep USMACTHAI's responsibilities separated. CINCUSARPAC explained:

Original planning for the execution of the air war in SEA after the cessation of hostilities in the RVN visualized [that] Hq USSAG [would be] retained for six months. The requirement to control the air capability remaining in Thailand. . . could be handled by an air division thru the normal chain of command commencing at the end of FY75. JCRC and DAO would be directly responsible to CINCPAC for command and control beginning FY76. It would appear appropriate to eliminate USSAG as a subunified command NLT the end of FY75.

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~~(C CDS 83)~~ Presumably in contending with the possibility that COMUSSAG/7AF might assume in-country responsibilities which, we have seen, were an exclusive MACTHAI province, CINCUSARPAC provided a detailed justification for retaining MACTHAI in its current configuration through FY75.¹⁸² MACTHAI was required for maintaining a viable U.S. presence in Thailand, for providing support to the U.S. Military Assistance Program to Thailand, for providing a capability for satisfying intelligence requirements, and for providing the capability to plan for unilateral, bilateral, or SEATO contingencies. CINCUSARPAC urged the retention of MACTHAI, in unaltered organizational structure, as a CINCPAC subunified command since such a decision would "enable the USG to show good faith in our pledge to assist in the defense of our allies." The intended meaning of this justification lay in the assistance the U.S. Army could provide in counterinsurgency training for the RTG and the capabilities of the U.S. Army special forces which were "maintaining a country orientation that allows for timely response to increased insurgency threats." With the limitations imposed by Congress on the use of ground combat troops in Thailand, it was not clear how the latter function was to have been performed.

CINCPAC RECOMMENDS STATUS QUO

~~(C CDS 83)~~ On 5 September 1973, CINCPAC consolidated the recommendations of his component commands, weighed them for their respective merits, and forwarded his recommendations to the JCS.¹⁸³ He concluded that there should be no basic change in the command arrangements in Thailand, whether it involved MACTHAI or its higher-ranking "up-country" neighbor, USSAG/7AF. For planning purposes, CINCPAC assumed that the U-Tapao/Sattahip complex, Ramasun Station, and the Ko Kha facility which provided the means for surveilling Chinese Communist missile activity would all be retained. In addition, it was assumed that the support for the AmEmb Bangkok, SEATO, the military assistance program, and the DAO, Laos, all incumbent upon MACTHAI, would remain unchanged. CINCPAC explained that while Hq MACTHAI would be reduced as forces in Thailand were reduced, it would continue to function as the single point of military contact with the U.S. Embassy and the Thai Government. As for Hq USSAG/7AF, CINCPAC supported the U.S. Air Force rationale by arguing for the retention of the NKP headquarters as long as joint forces were committed to the resumption of combat on short notice. While considering the resurge capability needed in contingencies, CINCPAC recommended that the scale of Hq USSAG/7AF be reduced as quickly as possible.

JCS EXTENDS USSAG/7AF THROUGH 1973-1974 DRY SEASON

~~(C CDS 83)~~ On 3 December 1973, the JCS answered CINCPAC's recommendations on USSAG/7AF as well as those dealing with the retention of Takhli RTAFB during the period of the F-111 deployment and the authority to discuss contract caretaker concepts with the RTG.¹⁸⁴ First, the JCS informed

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CINCPAC that Hq USSAG/7AF would be retained through the present dry season. In the vernacular of the monsoon seasons of Indochina, this meant that the headquarters would be retained at least through May 1974. CINCPAC's recommendations on the future status of Hq USSAG/7AF were to be solicited again in the spring of 1974.

~~(C 000 00)~~ In other matters, the JCS also decided that Takhli RTAFB would be retained until the F-111s stationed there were redeployed. In clearly defining the functions of the services, the JCS explained that the actual concept "to be adopted for placing a base in caretaker status" would be handled by CSAF in a separate action. CINCPAC had, in an earlier message, desired authority from the JCS for discussing reentry options with the RTG during negotiations on redeployments from Thailand. In response to this request, the JCS answered that the information which would be used in discussions with the RTG on reentry options would "be forwarded by the Department of State at the appropriate time."

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V. THAI NATIONAL INTERESTS AND THE ISSUE OF U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE
(1973-1974)

THAI NATIONAL INTERESTS AFTER OCTOBER 1973

~~(S XGDS 1,2,3 04)~~ The slowness of the policy-making mechanism of the U.S. Government to perceive the changes which were occurring in Thai national interests after the student-inspired revolution of October 1973 served to complicate the issue of how to regulate U.S. military presence in Thailand to attain foreign policy objectives in SE Asia. The official Washington view of Thai national policy between the end of World War II and the early 1970s was that, in its continuation of seven centuries of unbroken independence, the Kingdom of Thailand had successfully maintained its independence and internal stability by taking a strong pro-Western and anti-Communist position. External security and economic development had been promoted by the military regimes which were in ascendancy between 1932 and 1973; the strongly authoritarian governments had pursued these national interests while aligning themselves so closely with the U.S. Government since 1950 that Thai military units fought alongside U.S. forces in Korea and Vietnam. The Thai Government was evaluated as having maintained its relations with the United States in expectations of protection if Thailand were attacked by a hostile neighbor and in expectations of an important flow of economic and military assistance from the United States.¹⁸⁵

~~(S XGDS 1,2,3 04)~~ By the early 1970s, however, the Thanom Kittikachorn Government had begun to broaden its foreign relationships in adjustment to U.S. initiatives to withdraw from Vietnam.¹⁸⁶ Thailand had signed a trade agreement with the Soviet Union in 1970 and by 1972, Bangkok had received, within the city, trade representatives from Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Bulgaria. The Washington evaluation of the overthrow of the Thanom Government on 14 October 1973 had not seen the change as one which would result in major policy changes with the United States since there were similarities, it seemed, in the policies of the Sanya Thammasak Government. The analysis did take note, however, of the emphasis placed on public welfare by the interim Sanya Administration. The U.S. Embassy in Bangkok drew sharply contrasting conclusions in early 1974.

~~(S GDS 02)~~ Representatives of the U.S. Diplomatic Mission in Thailand estimated that the basic domestic factors influencing Thailand's political character and its relations with the United States had become dramatically altered as the result of the student inspired overthrow of the Thanom Government.¹⁸⁷ One political officer, Dr. Robert F. Zimmerman, who had long studied events in Thailand, observed that the "revolution of October 1973 will be at least as significant an event in Thailand's political history as the Coup of 1932 against the monarchy."¹⁸⁸ The official policy analysis by the U.S. Embassy of the events of the five months following the overthrow characterized the changes as "an unstable transition of what may

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become a Thai. . . constitutional democracy."¹⁸⁹ In the interim, the Sanya Government had undertaken the task of dealing with a wide variety of problems. They ranged from meeting the demands for a democratically elected constitutional government, contending with student protests on social, economic, and political issues, grappling with inflation, the energy crisis, a critical press, unprecedented strikes, and increasing urban unemployment.

~~(C CDC 82)~~ The new situation in Thailand was assessed by the American Embassy as directly changing current U.S. relations and definitely influencing relations with the elected government to follow "because popular pressures have demanded closer scrutiny of the U.S. presence" in Thailand.¹⁹⁰ Significantly, the mere fact that the Thai Government had now become more responsive to public pressures was sufficient reason, to Ambassador William R. Kintner's staff, for anticipating a need to make a major adjustment "in U.S. official style which could increase operating costs." Both the Thai Government and the U.S. Mission were re-examining the security relationship between the United States and Thailand, particularly the value of U.S. military presence in Thailand.

~~(C CDC 82)~~ The Embassy pointed out to the Department of State (DOS) that many articulate Thai were seriously questioning the value of the country's military alliance with the United States, partly because they were dubious of the "U.S. resolve and capability to meet its security commitments." In its policy analysis, the diplomatic post in Bangkok reported:¹⁹¹

The situation has led to controversy among Thai intellectuals and politicians over the U.S. military presence in Thailand. Thai disquiet stems in part from the failure of the preceding Thai governments to ensure popular understanding and support of the relationship between U.S. military activities in Indochina and Thai national interests. Doubt of the U.S. as an ally gives rise to further irritations.

The Embassy explained that the controversy over the large U.S. presence in Thailand was kept in the forefront of public awareness by the scholars and students in the universities and by the free-wheeling press. This public criticism, however, had its roots in simmering resentments against "America's overpowering role and, until quite recently, paternalistic operational style in Thailand." The uncertainty of future U.S. intentions in all of SE Asia also contributed to the dramatically changed Thai perceptions, fueling suspicions of being manipulated for U.S. purposes. In spite of the changed political awareness of the Thai, Thailand's foreign policy was expected to continue on the basis of close relationship with the United States "but with declining emphasis on the military aspects."¹⁹²

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NECESSITY FOR REDEFINING FOREIGN POLICY & CHANGING ITS CONDUCT

(S XDS-1,2,3 04) The difficulties that the AmEmb Bangkok encountered in conducting foreign relations with Thailand in 1974, conditions which continued into 1975, arose out of precedents that had been established with the authoritarian regimes and the inability of the DOS to redefine policy objectives for Thailand's sharply altered political climate, circumscribed as it was by the effects of Congressional legislation and the Watergate scandal.¹⁹³ In 1974, Thailand and the United States were linked by mutual security commitments formalized by the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), a bilateral Treaty of Amity and Economic Relations, agreements covering military assistance and economic and technical cooperation, and a memorandum of understanding on narcotics.¹⁹⁴ In practice, the ties between the two countries for 20 years had been much closer than public knowledge of them in either country would have been able to concede. This was based on the fact that the Thai Government had been prepared to agree in private to "virtually any reasonable request the United States made in the military and security field" in the years before 1973 because its goals in SE Asia were consistent with those of the United States.¹⁹⁵ For example, the RTG directly supported U.S. efforts in Indochina by allowing the United States to conduct logistic and air operations from Thai bases, by supplying combat troops for U.S. undertakings in Vietnam, and by allowing Thai volunteers to serve with Lao forces. As described earlier (page 35), the Thai military administrations, following traditional Thai practices, had felt no obligation to keep the Thai citizens informed of all of the agreements which had been worked out with the Americans.

(S XDS-02) Since the basic nature of the security relationship was being thoroughly reexamined by the Thai, the AmEmb Bangkok appraised the situation as a rare opportunity for placing U.S. foreign relations "on a firmer foundation than ever before."¹⁹⁶ It reported that the effect of the student revolution of October 1973 was to place the Thai in a position of "seeking a democratic form of constitutional government after almost two generations of rarely interrupted military rule." In the Embassy's analysis, Thai political perceptions had been heightened and a general awareness increased so that in March 1974 the Thai became concerned over the U.S. operational policy, taken for granted for a number of years, of using Thailand as a sanctuary for concentrated U.S. military efforts in Indochina, "albeit for the survival . . . of Southeast Asia." The Embassy urged the DOS to undertake, as national policy, the task of reassuring Thailand of "the stability of the U.S. security commitment including our basic obligation to the Thai who have been . . . [one of our] staunch [est] allies in Southeast Asia."

(S XDS-02) That the Thai had become politically more sensitized following October 1973 was apparent. If one were to expect the Thai citizenry to participate in newly won democratic processes, a competency in political judgment would be desired. The AmEmb Bangkok advised that as

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the result of this new political sensitivity, the United States was required, for the first time in recent Thai-U.S. relations, to pursue policy objectives which took note of and incorporated Thai policy responsibilities. The Embassy had taken particular note of the fact that the "Thai at various levels react sharply to real or fancied implications that we are manipulating them for American security interests." The Royal Thai Government in March 1974 insisted that the "U.S. not allow military force withdrawals to appear to be unilateral American actions."¹⁹⁷ It will be recalled that this particular policy had been discussed even by the prior military regime.

~~(S GDS 82)~~ The Embassy's appraisal of the situation as it was seen in Thailand stressed the Thai view that such events as the disclosing of force withdrawals first in Washington before the RTG had had a chance for timely local announcements left little alternative but to conclude that they were indeed unilateral U.S. actions. The publicized debates in Congress on U.S. force withdrawals from overseas, including Thailand, upset the Thai. The Embassy reported that "the Thai similarly and understandably resent any statement by Washington officials and members of Congress that the U.S. needs Thailand for its own security interests." The situation was not to improve in the following months.

~~(S GDS 82)~~ In June 1974, Ambassador Kintner submitted another policy paper to Washington in which he concluded that there was a "seriously widening gap" between "what U.S. national policy would like us to be able to do in Thailand and the means the U.S. Government is making available. . . to keep the Thais with us."¹⁹⁸ The strongly worded communication emphasized the necessity of dealing honestly with a new, civilian government embarking on a voyage of representative democracy in which the crew was inexperienced and the sailing weather, treacherous. As its starting point, the Embassy considered its major responsibility:

To convince the Thais that the U.S. considers Thailand's cooperation with us to be sufficiently high on the existing U.S. value scale in Southeast Asia and elsewhere in the globe, to justify their tolerating a large, frequently irritating, and psychologically disturbing U.S. presence in their midst.

The U.S. Mission's task was made formidable, but nonetheless necessary, since the Thai Government, in the eyes of U.S. Government representatives on the scene, was providing support for U.S. objectives in its detente relationships with the Communist superpowers and for U.S. efforts to bring the Indo-China war to an acceptable conclusion.

~~(S GDS 82)~~ Unfortunately, it was the RTG itself which was so vulnerable, even as the U.S. military presence was criticized. Ambassador Kintner, continuing his metaphor, explained that "a decent group of politically inexperienced civilians . . . [was] attempting to steer Thailand" in the direction of representative democracy while being constantly attacked by a

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free and "highly irresponsible press."¹⁹⁹ The situation was not helped by the fact that much of the criticism brought against the leaders centered on "their willingness to continue 'special' arrangements made in camera with the USG by deposed military leaders." Responsible Thai viewed many of these secret arrangements as prejudicial to Thai sovereignty. With the prevalence of these sentiments, U.S. military presence was scrutinized as if it was the embodiment of intrigues with the former regimes.

~~(C 883-82)~~ Members of the Embassy were uniform in their appraisal of the critical attention focussed on Americans in Thailand. A U.S. Information Service official noted:²⁰⁰

The main issue for Thailand throughout the period since the downfall of Praphat and Thanom has been social justice. Some elements of Thai society see the United States as an obstacle to the attainment of social justice in Thailand. In this connection, we are no doubt the victims of our past association with the Praphat/Thanom regime.

This attitude was held by various segments of Thai society, including the elite and educated middle class which were most important in the formation of the RTG policy.

~~(C 883-80)~~ Dr. Zimmerman, one of the political officers in the Embassy, expressed a similar evaluation:²⁰¹

When the October uprising occurred, we became identified with the group that was thrown out and no identification with having helped the 'little guy' in Thailand. Right now we are trying to create an image that we are interested in the 'little guy' in Thailand and we may never succeed.

He added that, in terms of U.S. foreign policy, Thailand had been too highly regarded in the years before the change in government in October 1973. In the period following the revolution, however, Thailand was held in "lower regard than it should be by the State Department and, certainly, the U.S. Congress."

~~(C 883-82)~~ The efforts to improve the image of Americans in Thailand were made difficult by habits formed in earlier times. The Ambassador explained that the precedents in operating style hindered the effective pursuit of foreign policy. For example, the egregious assumption that Americans could do anything they wished in Thailand led to U.S. involvement in embarrassing situations about which the Thai remained remarkably restrained. One event was described:²⁰²

A . . . notable example was the scheduling of a Navy P-3 departure for an Indian Ocean reconnaissance flight at the time newsmen were assembled at U-Tapao to report the initial departure

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of B-52s. At that time we had never been authorized to even tell the RTG about our Indian Ocean reconnaissance. . . . and the Thai MFA [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] had gone on public record that all U.S. forces were in Thailand solely to support mutually-agreed upon operations in Indochina.

~~(S-005-02)~~ It was clear to Ambassador Kintner that Thailand had become the main residual U.S. operating base in SE Asia, but the risks involved in losing these prerogatives were ultimately hazards to national objectives in the area.²⁰³ If the Thai were to end their permission for U.S. support activities into Laos and Cambodia, Kintner could see that there would be little chance of survival for the coalition government in Laos and that the Khmer Rouge would take over Cambodia. Referring to the strike forces controlled by Hq USSAG/7AF, he reminded policymakers that by being based on RTG bases they sustained the Paris Accords "by contributing to the deterrence of full-scale conflict by the North against South Vietnam."

~~(S-006-02)~~ The drawdown of U.S. forces from Vietnam placed a much greater importance on Thai bases. The Embassy noted that the extensive facilities which had been built in Thailand during the past 10 years were the only integrated base complexes open to the U.S. military forces between Turkey and the Philippines. Continued access to these facilities permitted the United States the option of backing its policies in Indochina and the surrounding region with military force.²⁰⁴

~~(S-006-02)~~ In June 1974, the Chief of the U.S. Mission anticipated the necessity of U.S. having forces and bases in Thailand through the 1975 dry season and took note of Thai bewilderment over legislated restrictions on the use of these forces.²⁰⁵

Thailand supports U.S. objectives in Indochina by permitting the continued presence of a large strike force of aircraft, supported by facilities at six air bases and an integrated network of ammunition depots and lines of supply. During the summer of 1974 this presence is being reduced by some 7,000 men and 150 aircraft, but we are anticipating retaining through the 1975 dry season a lean combat-ready strike force, including B-52s, F-4s, and F-111s, together with base facilities for rapid augmentation in case of renewal of the air war over Indochina. Maintenance of such an active air strike force after the U.S. Congress directed an end to air combat by U.S. forces over Indochina, effective 15 August 1973, puzzles many Thai.

The operating bases in Thailand were important for other strategic U.S. interests. They provided the primary capability for intelligence collection in SE Asia including signals intelligence (SIGINT), electronic intelligence (ELINT), and reconnaissance. Key facilities were made

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available for sensitive intelligence collection against the People's Republic of China, the USSR, and Central Asia. In addition, communications, logistics, and surveillance activities were based in Thailand which supported U.S. interests in the Indian Ocean.

~~(C GDS 82)~~ The Embassy reminded the State Department that the United States maintained "a number of very sensitive intelligence operations" in Thailand which provided important information on activities of the PRC and Soviet Union, including data on Chinese nuclear tests and the Chinese missile program.²⁰⁶ The facilities, equipment, and men used in these operations were scattered in the north, northeast, and central Thailand, with cover provided by other U.S. military installations or simply by the willingness of the key Thai leadership to cooperate in avoiding undue publicity. Since other U.S. intelligence operations based between the Philippines and Turkey had been forced to close, greater reliance had come to be placed on projects in Thailand to acquire important intelligence on central Asia. U.S. officials in Bangkok believed that public disclosure of the purpose of these installations at the time could result in their presence being denounced by the newly invested Thai officials.

~~(C GDS 82)~~ Additional data was acquired by the continuous, "sophisticated" monitoring of radio transmissions emanating from Communist-dominated areas, including South China, by U.S. ground radio stations emplaced in Thailand. The reliable collection of this data was a vital part of the national-level priority placed on maintaining a watch on Communist intentions. As described in Chapter IV, Thai-base reconnaissance flights were the primary means by which an assessment could be made of Communist activities in Indochina following the cease-fire in Vietnam.

Modest U.S. Cost for Bases and the Question of Commitments

~~(C GDS 82)~~ In the fiscal and political accounting of the support provided by Thailand to U.S. policy objectives, the U.S. Government was found wanting by the AmEmb Bangkok.²⁰⁷ Ambassador Kintner felt strongly that policymakers were seriously underestimating the value of the benefits received from Thailand's support. The Ambassador, who had arrived at his post less than a year previously, minced no words in his appraisal, strongly criticizing the manner in which the United States was dealing with the new, civilian government. He saw it as a long series of U.S. failures to honor commitments to Thailand. Many key Thai officials were expressing concern over a "growing lack of interest by the United States," remembering their disillusionment with "past let-downs."

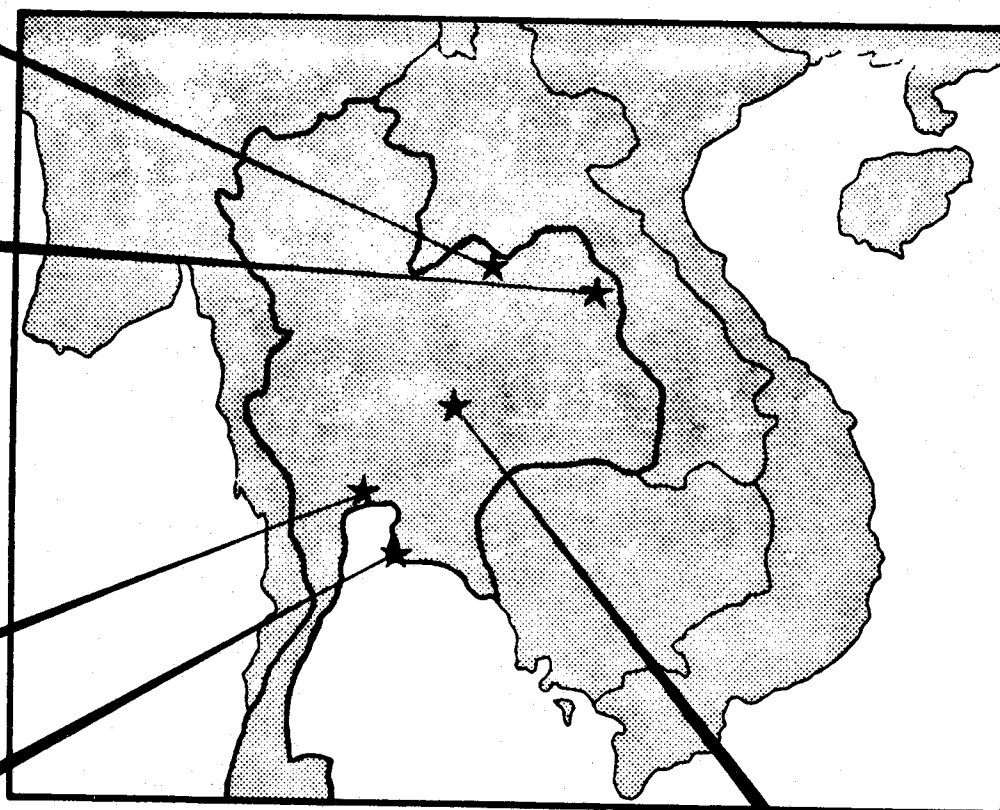
~~(C GDS 82)~~ On specific issues such as in the failure of the United States to deliver military equipment and provide financial support for Thai national security forces as promised, the Thai could not understand why the Americans could not find ways to "help tested friends. . . on moderate requests." Kintner used strong terms:²⁰⁸

Figure 6.

DEPLOYMENT OF MAJOR AIR FORCE UNITS

AS OF 31 DECEMBER 1974

UDORN	
13 AF ADVON	
432 TFW	
14 TBS	18 RF-4C
13 TFS	27 F-4D
421 TFS	24 F-4E
25 TFS	24 F-4E
4 TFS	24 F-4D
40 ARRS, DET 5	2 HH-43B
NAKHON PHANOM	
7 AF HQ	
56 SOW	1 EC-47
21 SOS	10 CH-53
23 TASS	40 OV-10
40 ARRS (MAC)	10 HH-53
	3 HH-43F



DON MUANG	
635 CSG DET 1	
U-TAPAO	
40 ARRS, DET 12(MAC)	2 HH-43F
307 SW (SAC) (PROV)	15 B-52D
	22 KC-135

KORAT			
388 TFW		347 TFW	
34 TFS	24 F-4D	428 TFS	18 F-111A
16 SOS	17 AC-130	429 TFS	18 F-111A
3 TFS	24 A-7D		
		56 ARRS (MAC)	5 HC-130

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While the operational relationship between Thailand and continuing U.S. operations in Indochina is well known, the bookkeeping relationship between U.S. direct support costs in Thailand and Indochina countries, which is studiously ignored by most Americans in responsible positions, is acutely observed by comparable Thai officials. In simple arithmetic, Thailand has received some \$2 billion in U.S. military and economic aid since 1951. In FY74 alone the U.S. poured over \$1.2 billion into South Vietnam, \$400 million into Cambodia and some \$200 million into Laos--almost as much as Thailand has gotten in 23 years. Our grant military and economic aid to Thailand in FY74 has been cut from an original planning figure of some \$75 million to about \$45 million (including narcotics, which they regard as being primarily in U.S. interests, and other specialized items). Thus the indispensable Thai bases have been and are being retained at bargain prices.

~~(C 8DS 82)~~ The Chief of the U.S. Mission reiterated that the Thai government leaders were intelligent and well-informed; they were fully aware of what the United States had done for some countries and "they know the relative well-being of other countries." The Thai leaders were able to deduce some "rough correlation between our monetary commitments and our value scale of importance." Ambassador Kintner concluded that "we have not lived up to our commitments" to confer with the Thai on all U.S. military activities in Thailand, to support their efforts to improve their own defense, and to enhance their security against external threats.²⁰⁹

U.S. PRESENCE IN THAILAND LARGELY U.S. AIR FORCE

(U) At the end of March 1973, the U.S. military presence in Thailand was constituted largely of USAF personnel with U.S. military activities concerned with logistics support of operations in Laos and, increasingly, "activities relating to Cambodia."²¹⁰ In contrast to the 31,685 U.S. military personnel in Thailand in January 1972, there were 44,406 stationed there in March 1973. Most of this increase had been caused by the deployment of U.S. Marine Corps air units and additional USAF units to counter the North Vietnamese Spring Offensive of 1972.²¹¹ Since the termination of U.S. combat air operations in Vietnam, the presence of the additional aircraft and men in Thailand had been justified as necessary for enforcing the Vietnam and Laos cease-fires and providing air support to Cambodian Government troops.

(U) On 1 April 1973, USAF elements were located on seven bases in Thailand, accounting for the major portion of U.S. presence in the country. Out of the total complement of 44,406 military members, Air Force personnel accounted for 37,499 or 84 per cent of all military personnel in Thailand.

Taken together, the "collective U.S. presence in Thailand" was, on 1 April 1973, one of the largest groups of U.S. military personnel in any one country outside the U.S. ²¹²

(U) The major organizations to which these personnel were assigned included: U.S. Military Assistance Command, Thailand (USMACTHAI), and Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group (JUSMAG), 545; Deputy Chief, Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group (DEPCHJUSMAG), 76; Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, 60; 7/13AF, 36,690; U.S. Army Support Command, Thailand, 2,249; and Hq USSAG/7AF, 642. The remaining men belonged to miscellaneous organizations such as internal security units, a U.S. Army Special Forces battalion, and a Marine corps training unit. Although the more than 44,000 military personnel in Thailand exceeded the 32,200 ceiling which had been agreed upon in FY71 between the Thai and U.S. Governments, the "excess" was considered to be temporary and no new ceiling had been negotiated. It had been agreed upon at the time of the augmentation of forces for the NVA offensive of 1972 that the United States could bring additional personnel "up to the number at which the U.S. presence had peaked in 1968-69, a level of about 48,000." ²¹³

(U) A year later, on 2 May 1974, Hq USMACTHAI described military organizations in Thailand as belonging to four categories: combat forces, support units, USMACTHAI/JUSMAGTHAI units, and "other units whose missions are determined at the DOD level." ²¹⁴ Most of the U.S. forces in Thailand, as it was a year earlier, were USAF units, consisting of about 22,000 men, which were responsible for meeting "combat contingencies in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam." An additional 9,000 personnel provided support for these forces and "other regional forces," presumably those forces which had responsibilities beyond the boundaries of Thailand. About 3,000 were assigned to units whose presence in Thailand was required by DOD or "national level security interests." Some 900 were assigned to COMUSMAC-THAI to administer the "Thai Military Assistance Program, third country training, and to act as an interface between the Royal Thai Government and U.S. forces in-country."

(U) In contrast to the large number of U.S. military personnel in Thailand, the U.S. Mission in Thailand--the diplomatic delegation of the United States--was numerically much fewer, though still one of the largest of all missions. ²¹⁵ Within the community of diplomatic posts, however, the AmEmb Bangkok was considered to be the "most complex in terms of organization and responsibilities." Ambassador Kintner controlled all elements of Washington agencies operating in Thailand through the Country Team* by

* (U) Country Team--The expanded team included the Ambassador, the Deputy Chief of Mission and the chiefs of 20 agencies and major Embassy offices: the Director of U.S. Operations Mission; Commander, MACTHAI/JUSMAG; Director of U.S. Information Service; the Special Assistant; Counselor for Economic Affairs; Counselor for Political Military Affairs; Counselor for Administrative Affairs; Counselor for Political Affairs; Counselor for

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specific authority delegated by the President. In May 1974, about 1,600 Americans were under the Ambassador's direct control, excluding U.S. military forces in operational commands. Of these, about 900 were military personnel. Surprisingly, out of the 1,600 U.S. employees directly under the control of the Ambassador, only about 70 were Department of State foreign service officers.

~~(C GDS 80)~~ As the result of the preponderance of U.S. military personnel in Thailand during 1973 and 1974, the image of the United States was conveyed in everyday interactions with the politically sensitized Thai, not by the official delegation given such responsibilities but by military personnel who were unschooled in foreign relations. At a meeting of the political-military Country Team on 25 January 1974, Ambassador Kintner stressed the necessity of all military members to be aware of overall U.S. responsibilities so that U.S. relationships with the Thai would not be jeopardized.²¹⁶ The U.S. community in Thailand, he noted, was especially vulnerable to criticisms from the Thai simply because of the "size, wealth, and ubiquity" of its presence. Since his major task was to assure "the continued acceptability of U.S. forces in Thailand in consonance with the Administration's stated policy," all members of the community were asked to "bend over backwards, to be circumspect, and to do everything" possible to avoid a major incident of any kind. The matter was made more complex by some intelligence that the vulnerability of U.S. military presence was being cleverly exploited by Soviet propaganda operations. If Country Team efforts were not successful, concluded the Ambassador, the Thai Government leadership "may be forced by public animosity to disassociate themselves completely" from the U.S. community in Thailand and to demand that "U.S. influence and presence be markedly and immediately reduced." This was to have prophetic implications in the months that followed.

THAI NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATES U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE

~~(S YGDS 3 04)~~ The debate in the Thai National Legislative Assembly over Thanat Khoman's foreign troops bill in August 1974 was contentious, but it did spotlight the basic issues of U.S. military presence for the country's citizens.²¹⁷ At the same time, no better example could be found which would characterize the changed political fortunes of the Thai political leadership following October 1973 than Dr. Thanat Khoman, the

* (cont) Development and Security; the Defense Attache; the Consul General; the Director of Drug Enforcement Agency; the Director of the Peace Corps; the Director for Regional Economic Development; the Agricultural Attache; the Special Representative of the DOD; three consuls; and the Executive Assistant. In addition, political-military country team meetings brought together representatives of key military commands in Thailand.

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Minister of Foreign Affairs in the deposed Thanom/Praphat regime. It was testimony also of krengchai* in Thai political consciousness and of Thanat Khoman's staying power that he had managed to be retained as a foreign affairs adviser to Prime Minister Sanya of the caretaker government and to become a member of the Legislative Assembly. The U.S. Embassy in Bangkok warned, however, of his changed attitudes toward the United States, describing him as a "political gadfly" and being "bitter and resentful against the United States" and the AmEmb Bangkok for "alleged wrongs we have perpetrated against him."²¹⁸ Since he shared a responsibility in matters dealing with the United States as a member of the ousted regime, Thanat Khoman's derision of the United States Government's "proclivities to deal with complaisant [Thai] 'military henchmen'" did not fall on entirely sympathetic ears.

(U) In his role as Assemblyman, Thanat Khoman explained that there were four basic reasons for the U.S. military presence in Thailand.²¹⁹ These reasons were alleged to have been obtained in private conversations with the Ambassador, but were being divulged because of his hitherto submerged "true loyalty" to Thai interests. They were:

- To warn North Vietnam not to mount an attack on South Vietnam.
- To supply the Cambodian Government.
- To counter-balance the growing Soviet influence in Southeast Asia.
- To conduct reconnaissance of the Soviet Naval Forces in the

Indian Ocean.

He then ridiculed the reasons as contrary to fact or to Thai national interests. Thanat Khoman argued:²²⁰

■ No one could believe the effectiveness of the U.S. warning since the Congress had prohibited the use of U.S. forces in Vietnam.

■ American assistance to Cambodia may not be compatible with Thailand's interests.

■ Several visiting, high-ranking U.S. officials told Thanat that the U.S. Government regards the growing influence of the USSR in Southeast Asia as a low-priority matter.

■ The United States has no right to use her Thailand-based forces for reconnaissance of Soviet activities or those of any other nation.

(U) Thanat Khoman pointed out to other Assemblymen that the role of the U.S. forces in the defense of Thailand was made meaningless because of Congress' legislation. He argued that the threat to Thailand's security "would not come from the outside, but from internal turmoil and strife" caused by the U.S. military presence itself "with its detrimental cultural, economic, and political ramifications."

*Refer to definition in Chap I, p 9.

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(U) A number of Assemblymen opposed Thanat's bill and provided telling arguments against the purpose of bill while exposing the former Foreign Minister's duplicity. One of the speakers, Royal Thai Air Force Major General Sit Sawettasila, Deputy Secretary General of the National Security Council, strongly opposed Thanat in his first Assembly speech.²²¹ He reminded the Assembly how the North Vietnamese troops had invaded Laos in the early 1960s, even threatening Thailand's border, and how the SEATO unanimity rule had prevented assistance from Thailand's allies. Sit exposed Thanat's opportunism. It was Thanat himself "who initiated talks with the U.S. for assistance to protect Thailand from Communist attack." Later, Thai-United States agreement to stand together against the Communist subversion in South Vietnam had evolved, noted Sit with irony, in the Thanat-Rusk communique. In the matter of sovereignty at Thai air bases, Sit disclaimed any problem since the Thai controlled the bases and the Americans were in a tenant status. Moreover, U.S. troop strength was gradually being reduced in Thailand as mutually agreed upon "in contrast to the North Vietnam refusal to withdraw from Laos--a demand which no one has voiced, including Thanat himself." He reminded the Assembly that a sudden withdrawal of Americans from bases would lead to severe unemployment in northeast Thailand.

(U) A former Bangkok Democrat parliamentarian and current Assemblyman, Phichai Rattakun, continued the denunciation of Thanat Khoman by lashing out at Thanat's contradictory stands on the stationing of U.S. troops in Thailand.²²² Phichai reasoned that it was obvious that Thanat knew about "and was in full agreement with the introduction of American troops." He asked sharply why Thanat Khoman, as Minister of Foreign Affairs, had not opposed or made known at any time "his objections or even displeasure" if, as he now claimed, he was against the U.S. buildup in Thailand before October 1971. Then in rhetoric which suited his logic, Phichai was persuaded that he would "accept the alterations in sovereignty which the presence of foreign troops may temporarily require" in the interests of national survival.

~~(S-XGDS-3-04)~~ In reviewing these events, the AmEmb Bangkok decided that the defeat of the foreign troops bill in the Assembly and the "indignities he suffered in the debate" were clear indications that Thanat Khoman did not have a significant following and "has virtually no prospect of acquiring one."²²³

POTE SARASIN CAUTIONS AGAINST HASTY U.S. WITHDRAWAL

~~(C-GDS-80)~~ In a noteworthy discussion on 21 February 1974, Ambassador Kintner and one of Thailand's distinguished elder statesmen, Pote Sarasin, compared ideas on the question of the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Thailand and Thailand's role in detente.²²⁴ Pote explained that he disagreed with former Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman's assertion that Thailand's problems with the insurgents would diminish and evaporate with the removal

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of U.S. forces. He recalled an earlier conversation with the Chinese Deputy Foreign Minister at a United Nations General Assembly meeting, held several years previously, at which the People's Republic of China official "expressed the PRC's toleration for continued U.S. military presence in Southeast Asia." Pote had deduced that the Chinese were afraid that a "precipitous U.S. withdrawal from this region would create a vacuum of power from which only the Russians could benefit."

(C 686 88) Pote Sarasin, a minister or high official in the RTG for more than 20 years, cautioned that all of these "rational arguments for continued U.S. presence were of little avail in dealing with the fundamentally illogical Thai nationalism that demanded the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops." Fueling the heat of Thai nationalism, added Pote, were statements by such people as Senator Fulbright opposing continued U.S. presence in this area. These publicized statements offended many Thai, generating renewed demands for a total U.S. withdrawal.

U.S. MISSION DISCUSSES CONDUCT OF FOREIGN POLICY

(U) In May 1974 the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok discussed the conduct of foreign policy in a large mission at some length with the DOS.²²⁵ The opportunity for the analysis arose from a critical review of operations conducted by all missions at the time by the Commission on the Organization of the U.S. Government for the Conduct of Foreign Policy (hereafter Commission on Foreign Policy). In a surprisingly straightforward report recommending many changes, the AmEmb concluded that there were four basic, underlying problems hampering the more successful implementation of foreign policy:

- The most serious problems in control, coordination, and communications systems were in Washington, and relatively little could be done in the field to improve the conduct of foreign relations until the machinery was made more responsive and effective in the capital.

- In spite of the general recognition that a flexible foreign policy was needed so that adjustments could be made to a changing world, there was, nevertheless, a great need for a better definition of objectives and goals and the need to be able to plan programs and assistance beyond a fiscal year.

- Although the Ambassador was given the mandate by the President to coordinate and control all U.S. Government entities in Thailand, an excessive amount of time and energy was required to do so because the organizational structure in the field reflected, on a smaller scale, the complexities, division, and confusion found in Washington.

- An identifiable inequity in the treatment of foreign affairs personnel.

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(U) The Embassy based its discussion on the importance of providing the DOS itself with sufficient authority and control over all government interests and functions "when foreign policy and its implementation" were involved. It was the experience of the post in Thailand that the conduct of foreign policy was often in the hands of officials not associated with the State Department and, worse, with individuals who were unaware that their actions constituted foreign policy or affected it. Percipiently, the officials in Bangkok observed that foreign policy could no longer be considered a "simple extrapolation of domestic interests congealed into one large national interest." They remarked:²²⁶

The impracticality of consolidating into a single department all matters affecting foreign policy is readily acknowledged in this day and age when the line between foreign and domestic policy is ever less distinguishable. . . . For those interests and functions which impinge heavily on foreign policy but would not properly be placed within the Department of State, it is essential that State be given sufficient authority and pre-eminence to control them when foreign policy and its implementation are involved.

(U) The Embassy repeated its conclusion that too many separate agencies were involved in the conduct of foreign affairs.²²⁷ They included the Departments of Defense, Commerce, Treasury, and Agriculture; the Central Intelligence Agency; the U.S. Information Agency; among others. Since their areas of responsibility obviously overlapped, the Bangkok Embassy recommended a reduction in numbers and a transfer of functions to an appropriate cabinet office. Foreign policy functions scattered among several departments and agencies should be consolidated. The AmEmb's recommendations dealt with all levels of the Executive Branch:

As a part of the total effort at consolidation, the National Security Council should be limited to narrow issues of military security, not serve as a second State Department, and the White House staff should be limited to a size commensurate to its coordinating role.

(U) Another basic problem facing the diplomatic post in Thailand was "the great need for better definition of foreign policy objectives and goals and the need to be able to fulfill commitments" while carrying out longer range programs, particularly assistance.²²⁸ The Embassy argued that these problems needed to be resolved in Washington, although the posts in the field should be allowed to offer suggestions. This problem affected the issue of U.S. presence in Thailand:

One of the greatest frustrations in the field is the inability to act more effectively in the present in terms of our longer range goals and interests. In this post, for example, we have been greatly hampered in our dealings with the Royal

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Thai Government on the U.S. military presence here because of a lack of knowledge as to our long term objectives in the area.

The Embassy expressed similar frustrations with its assistance responsibilities where definite funding commitments could not be provided because of "dilatatory appropriation procedures."

MACTHAI CRITIQUES COMMAND AND CONTROL IN THAILAND

(U) Serving in his capacity as the senior military representative in Thailand and the military representative of the U.S. Diplomatic Mission in Thailand, COMUSMACTHAI recommended changes to the Ambassador which would improve the command and control of military organizations in Thailand.²²⁹ They were drawn up with the purpose of bringing these matters to the attention of the Commission on Foreign Policy in May 1974 and of improving the circumstances for the Ambassador, who was the senior representative in Thailand.

(U) Although MACTHAI had some subjective interest in improving command arrangements in Thailand, particularly if its own controls could be strengthened, the Bangkok headquarters was justified in publicizing some basic problems which the Ambassador faced in his role as the Chief of the Mission.²³⁰ Since the U.S. Embassy functioned differently than military commands, it was structured differently.²³¹ Hq MACTHAI perceived the difficulties of control arising over military commands which had regional responsibilities and "national security interests" that extended beyond the Embassy's jurisdiction.²³² Stated simply, MACTHAI contended that embassies were accredited to a single country while Hq USSAG/7AF, for example, had responsibilities in Laos, North and South Vietnam, and Cambodia. As a result, the Ambassador found himself responsible for:

. . . . supervision and control of military forces who take their operational guidance from outside sources and whose primary mission is centered outside of the Ambassador's geographical area of responsibility.

(U) In addition to the difficulty of managing a structurally more sophisticated organization than the Embassy itself, the Ambassador's situation was further aggravated by the limitations of COMUSMACTHAI's command and control. Although he had been designated the senior military representative in Thailand by CINCPAC, COMUSMACTHAI was "not the senior U.S. military officer in Thailand" and did not have operational control over most of the forces deployed in the country.²³³ Since most of the military forces were USAF, they were controlled by 13AF.

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(U) The anomaly of these command relationships was of sufficient importance to the Ambassador that he conveyed MACTHAI's recommendations to the Commission on Foreign Policy.²³⁴ The Ambassador recommended:

Unity of command and efficiency could best be served by having one senior military officer in country responsible for, and in command of, all forces. Forces responding to higher level requirements could continue to report to higher headquarters but the responsibility for their day-to-day operations would clearly reside in-country. The system devised should allow the military the necessary freedom to meet regional and national security requirements while at the same time providing the Ambassador with a means of control commensurate with his responsibilities as the President's personal representative responsible for all U.S. Government activities affecting U.S. relations with the country to which he is accredited. Correspondingly, in areas where assigned military forces are heavily engaged in two or more countries, there should be designated a senior State Department counterpart to the senior military commander. Ideally, this State representative would have the authority and capability to coordinate and direct mission activities on a day-to-day basis for all the countries within the corresponding geographical area.

The Ambassador's discussion on the differences existing in organization and functions between the Embassy and a major military headquarters highlighted the contrasting roles played by the DOS and DOD as they influenced foreign policy.

AMEMB BANGKOK EVALUATES POLICY FOR
THAILAND AND DETERRENT CAPABILITY OF USAF

(U) The U.S. Embassy in Bangkok continually assessed the appropriateness of U.S. policy for Thailand during 1974 while sustaining its efforts to induce the Department of State to make timely modifications of that policy. It should be remembered that 1974 was a year of crisis for the Executive Branch of the U.S. Government with President Nixon's resignation on 9 August 1974. While the sum and substance of the Embassy's analyses were forwarded to the Department of State in October 1974, the contents of which are discussed in following paragraphs, it is useful to review some of the observations made by the Embassy staff during a period when dramatic changes were occurring in Thailand as well.

~~(C GDS 02)~~ In early August 1974 Ambassador Kintner met Prime Minister Sanya Thammasak and Foreign Minister Charunphan Isarangkun Na Ayutthaya to review relations between the two countries which they represented. At the meeting the Prime Minister expressed concern over the possibility of

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impeachment or the resignation of President Nixon and the effect such an act would have upon U.S. foreign policy. Kintner assured Sanya and Charunphan that U.S. institutions and system of government "were sufficiently strong to endure the present trauma and the USG would continue to function effectively in foreign affairs." Since Dr. Kissinger had been "vindicated by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee," he was expected to continue in his position, irrespective of other events. The United States remained steadfast, assured Kintner, in its objective of "attaining a peaceful situation in the world."²³⁵

~~(S ODS 02)~~ The Ambassador continued. In support of U.S. efforts toward such an end, Dr. Kissinger considered U.S. military assets in Thailand "as essential to bringing peace and stability to the Indochina countries." The Ambassador observed that the Royal Thai Government also had seen U.S. forces as a positive factor in international relationships and in its interest to have the forces stationed in Thailand. Sanya and Charunphan were informed that U.S. troop levels had fallen below 30,000 and the goal of 27,000 or less by the end of 1974 would be attained. In the interests of reassuring the Prime Minister of U.S. efforts to reduce military presence, Ubon RTAFB had been placed in standby status and Takhli RTAFB, closed. While he could report progress in these areas, Kintner sought to evolve better policies.

~~(C ODS 02)~~ During 13 and 14 September 1974, Ambassador Kintner and mission representatives discussed, in a free exchange of ideas and opinions at Hua Hin, Thailand, the urgency of clarifying U.S. policy for Thailand.²³⁶ The discussions evolved from critiquing the Ambassador's paper, "Southeast Asia in a Global Context," which was prepared with the objective of inducing top policymakers in Washington to pay "proper attention to the United States' position in Southeast Asia." The main thrust of Kintner's paper was that:

. . . if we do not disengage ourselves from involvement in post-Vietnam-Southeast Asia in a responsible way that does not give the area to North Vietnam simply by default, the Thai will view our whole intervention here as a cruel hoax since North Vietnam, the primary threat to their security, emerged from the war as a stronger military power than before.

Although the conferees were not unanimous, there was general agreement with the Ambassador that the primary interests of the United States in Thailand "were strategic, involving the preservation of freedom of Thailand and its neighbors to determine their own future in defense of the preservation of that same freedom for ourselves."

~~(C ODS 02)~~ The Hua Hin conferees agreed that North Vietnam was the primary destabilizing element in SE Asia, although it was not clear what its ambitions were in this regard. Some of the counselors thought that

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North Vietnam sought "hegemony over all of Indochina and perhaps even Thailand," while others doubted North Vietnamese designs "beyond reunification of Vietnam." From these discussions, mission members were led to the question of the effectiveness of military deterrence:

Some of those who already recognized the conflicting interests between the status quo of the U.S. and the aggressiveness of North Vietnam questioned the deterrent capability of our Air Force contingent in Thailand, hampered as it was by Congressional restraints and a domestic political situation in the U.S. that precluded its use against the North Vietnamese.

~~(C-CDS 82)~~ In response to this question, one which the Thai officials were also asking with frequent and annoying regularity, Kintner answered that the North Vietnamese planners "must take into account capability as well as the will to use that capability" [emphasis added] which was the substance of deterrence.²³⁷

~~(C-CDS 80)~~ In an earlier discussion with Pote Sarasin, the Ambassador explained that deterrence, in order to be effective, "need not be absolute," but could be conveyed by the uncertainty principle. He explained:²³⁸

Planners in Hanoi who might contemplate launching an offensive in South Vietnam realize that the President of the United States could request Congress to authorize the use of America's air arm stationed in Thailand. In the event of a flagrant large-scale North Vietnamese attack, Congressional approval of such a request was certainly possible especially considering the clear support which the Congress of the United States gave the President and the Secretary of State to deal with the October 1973 Middle East crisis.

The forces in Thailand were, therefore, crucial to support the continuation of detente and were not, contrary to Thanat Khoman's publicized assertion, completely ineffective.

THAI POLICY IN LATE 1974

~~(S-XGDS 3-04)~~ In an unusually pragmatic approach to determining "if a consensus on foreign policy" existed in the Thai national security affairs bureaucracy, the AmEmb Bangkok had studied the Thai policy formulation process in an attempt to visualize Thai perceptions of the problem.²³⁹ With the Ambassador's emphasis on the necessity for Americans to understand Thai attitudes and with the abilities of a competent Embassy staff, many of whom were proficient in the Thai language, the findings of the study were as interesting as they were insightful.

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~~(S XGDS 3-04)~~ Thai skepticism was aroused over the claim that a policy of close cooperation with the United States was "still adequate for protecting Thai security interests" as the result of the termination of direct U.S. military operations in Indochina, the rapprochement with the People's Republic of China, and the diminishing U.S. military and economic assistance. The Bangkok diplomatic post observed that there were different "perceptions of Thailand's security interests and the policies needed to deal with them" even within the Thai foreign affairs/national security bureaucracy.* The Embassy concluded, nevertheless, that general agreement existed among Thai officials "that a special relationship with the United States" was desirable while others believed that "Thailand can best preserve its sovereignty by moving away from what they see as excessive dependence on the U.S."240

~~(S XGDS 3-04)~~ The two paramount issues in Thai foreign affairs and national security considerations were, as they had been earlier in the year, Thai-U.S. relations and the U.S. military presence in Thailand. The intensity of concern over Thai-U.S. relationships was seen as ebbing, "both in absolute terms and relative to Thailand's associations with other countries, mostly Asian, but including the Soviet Union." Significant changes had occurred after the revolution in October 1973. The AmEmb reported that "... while the Thai military was the leading proponent of the enormous enhancement of Thai-U.S. cooperation that occurred in the 1960s, the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs both responding to and backed by the press," was the motivating force in the obvious "movement to restore balance to that relationship."241

~~(S XGDS 3-04)~~ Although Thai military leaders remained convinced, in October 1974, that U.S. air units in Thailand deterred North Vietnam from launching another full scale offensive against the Republic of Vietnam, the conviction was not shared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Moreover, the reservations that the Thai public felt about U.S. forces were exemplified by the attitudes of the Ministry. The AmEmb Bangkok decided that the value of U.S. presence in Thailand began to be seriously questioned at the time of the signing of the cease-fire in Vietnam in January 1973 when, in the Thai view, U.S. forces had been compelled to leave "without a clearcut victory or precise settlement." The publicity of the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam, particularly the unflattering picture of U.S. forces "moving en masse to a fallback position in Thailand, heightened Ministry of Foreign Affairs and public misgivings."242

* ~~(S XGDS 3-04)~~ Foreign affairs/national security bureaucracy--In Oct 74, the U.S. Embassy Bangkok concluded that security interests and policies were influenced by the MFA, the Military Supreme Command Hq (Forward), the Royal Thai Army, the Ministry of Interior, the National Security Council, the Directorate for Central Intelligence, Thanat Khoman, the National Legislative Assembly, the press, the students, the professors, and the Prime Minister's office.

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~~(S. YCDS 3 04)~~ The MFA could see few positive benefits from U.S. military presence in Thailand. The Ambassador and his staff reported:²⁴³

Our conversations with Thai foreign affairs officials at all levels also indicate that they tend to take at face value the various Congressional debates on aid and military involvement. They remain convinced that the U.S. Air Force will never again fly in anger against Hanoi, and they do not buy our arguments that premature force reductions would send a "damaging political signal" to Hanoi. The MFA tends to perceive our presence both as impotent to really help Thailand with its security problems, and, at the same time, an irritant in Thai relations with Hanoi.

There was no indication that the Foreign Ministry had a "comprehensive idea" of how U.S. presence was actually contributing to Thai security interests. The U.S. explanation that military forces were a "stabilizing influence in SE Asia" was accepted, but the Thai were less receptive to the argument that forces were a "concrete deterrent of North Vietnamese adventurism."

~~(S. YCDS 3 04)~~ On the other hand, the Thai military establishment, partly on the basis of not having been required to explain or justify their decisions to the Thai people, continued to assume that the "American military presence has been and continues to be a good thing."²⁴⁴ Unfortunately for U.S. policy in Thailand, the Thai military were unable to provide a rationale on just how and why it was a good thing from the Thai point of view. It was the U.S. Embassy's conclusion that the Thai military lacked certain attributes normally associated with fighting strength and proficiency because it was "far more a political than a fighting machine," because it had consistently "refused to recognize the essentiality of military organization, training, discipline, and leadership to combat readiness," and because of the real lack of senior military officers knowledgeable in foreign affairs after the departure of Thanom and Praphat.

~~(S. YCDS 3 04)~~ In its analysis of Thailand in a balance of forces relationship, the Embassy staff concluded that Thailand behaved with superiority towards its immediate neighbors, but was characterized by "a lack of self-confidence" in its posture with the United States and other great powers.²⁴⁵ It also concluded that these general attitudes were not changing to any extent in spite of the readjustments occurring among the great powers and the countries of SE Asia. While refraining from a direct intrusion into Thailand's relationship with other countries, the Embassy explained, partly in frustration:

We have tried often and hard to convince Thai policy-makers that what we are doing in Thailand is in their interest and implied as strongly as we dared that our presence here is

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not an inconsiderable trump card which the Thai could some day use in negotiations with the DRV if they don't discard it beforehand for domestic political reasons. They consistently fail to take up and address this point.

~~(S X005 9-04)~~ Notwithstanding the emphasis on reducing U.S. military presence in Thailand, the American Embassy concluded, in October 1974, that none of the policymaking elements of the Royal Thai Government demanded a termination or severe downgrading of the close ties between Thailand and the United States.²⁴⁶ It did not appear that even the MFA wanted to "throw the U.S. military completely out of Thailand." They obviously wanted, however, the size of the presence reduced considerably, "while appreciating that both sides have a real stake in readjusting U.S.-Thai relations in such a way as to preserve both parties' interests." The MFA was seen as realizing the necessity, perhaps, reluctantly, of preserving the possibility of returning or reintroducing U.S. forces for contingencies while encouraging the reduction of these forces.

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~~(C 005-00)~~ The task facing the U.S. Mission, taking these evaluations in mind, was succinctly summarized by one of its political officers:²⁴⁷

I see our effort in Thailand--in terms of our diplomatic and military relations--as an effort to work out some kind of adjustment in our relationship with the Thai that will permit us to either maintain a base or two or guarantee access to get back in if necessary. But it must be a credible political and military understanding, even if it is basically merely symbolic.

Unfortunately, neither the U.S. Department of State nor the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs was able to make the innovative changes in foreign policy which were required to contend with the dramatic events of March and April 1975 in Indochina.

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VI. DISARRAY IN FOREIGN POLICY FOR
SOUTHEAST ASIA AND DISESTABLISHMENT OF USSAG/7AF

FRAGMENTED POLICY FORMULATION

(U) When Congress constrained the Executive Branch in the formulation and conduct of foreign policy for SE Asia, by depriving diplomats of unfettered support by military forces, it declared that it would exercise its rights of undertaking acts of war and influencing its prosecution by controlling the expenditure of funds. The events of early 1975 demonstrated that the President and members of his Cabinet were willing to accept the affirmation that Congress shared in the shaping of foreign policy. However, the prolonged debate in Congress over the exercising of these responsibilities when a crisis arose in April 1975 showed that it could not quickly define suitable objectives for a policy and follow them with direct steps for attainment. A lack of a policy for Vietnam and a hesitation to unleash U.S. airpower to oppose the invading forces prepared Vietnam's fall to Communist North Vietnam. Undoubtedly, Congressional uncertainty only reflected similar popular sentiments about SE Asia and partially explained the reality of U.S. disengagement.

(U) Secretary of State Kissinger declared, on 17 April 1975, that "comity between the executive and legislative branches" was the only realistic basis for national action.²⁴⁸ In his own estimation, he thought that the 10-year struggle in the United States "over executive dominance in foreign affairs" was over. Kissinger reported to the American Society of Newspaper Editors that the "recognition that the Congress is a coequal branch of government" was the dominant fact of national politics. He cautioned, however, that the formulation of foreign policy would suffer unless a spirit of cooperation prevailed:

The executive accepts that the Congress must have both the sense and the reality of participation; foreign policy must be a shared enterprise. The question is whether the Congress will go beyond the setting of guidelines to the conduct of tactics; whether it will deprive the executive of discretion and authority in the conduct of diplomacy while at the same time remaining institutionally incapable [emphasis added] of formulating or carrying out a clear national policy of its own.

(U) A week earlier, in a major foreign policy address to a joint session of Congress, President Ford had requested a clarification of the legal restrictions enacted by Congress on the use of U.S. military forces in SE Asia along with emergency funding for military and humanitarian assistance for South Vietnam and Cambodia.²⁴⁹ Because of the rapidly deteriorating military situations in the two countries, the President urged the speedy resolution of authorities so that U.S. forces could be

employed "for the limited purposes of protecting American lives by insuring their evacuation," if it became necessary. Ford anticipated that there would be little time for debate if the authority were actually needed. The President's request was heedful of the laws forbidding the use of funds appropriated by the Congress for acts of force in SE Asia as well as the War Powers Resolution which had been passed with the specific purpose of redefining authority for committing U.S. forces into hostilities.

War Powers Resolution

(U) As the result of the hearings held by the 91st, 92nd, and 93rd Congresses (1969 through 1975)* on the constitutional grants on "war powers,"* many members of Congress concluded or confirmed to themselves that the constitutional balance of authority over war-making had indeed swung heavily toward the President.²⁵⁰ The initial impetus for the bills and resolutions on the war powers question had been generated by the Cambodian incursion of May 1970. Congressmen, including those who supported the operation into Cambodia, became troubled by the lack of prior consultation and a near-crisis in relations erupted between the Executive and Legislative Branches. In order to restore the balances specified and implied in the Constitution, Congress reasserted what it saw to be its prerogatives in the basic principle of war powers, in contrast to pure legislative rights on funding military operations.

(U) Beginning on 13 August 1970, when Representative Clement J. Zablocki, Democrat from Wisconsin, introduced a joint resolution, the long legislative debate over the powers of the Congress and the powers of the President in warmaking continued for more than three years, before being transformed into a law which was not entirely satisfactory to either side. The roots of the dispute over these powers lay in the intentions of the framers of the Constitution to maintain a balance as well as in the attempts to secure judicial interpretations of the Constitution through the years since its adoption in 1789. A leading advocate in the 1970s of restoring Constitutional balance, Senator Eagleton, maintained that the Supreme Court, at least as early as 1800, had ruled that Congress was not limited to formal declarations by its power to initiate hostilities.²⁵¹ Congress could authorize and thereby control military actions which fell short of total war between two nations. (Refer to Appendix 1 for a review of the contending issues of the War Powers Resolution.)

**(U) The period of the hearings and debate on war powers was generally between 1970 and 1973, although it remained and would remain an issue in the years following.*

**(U) War Powers--The authority inherent in sovereignties to declare, conduct, and conclude armed hostilities with other states.*

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(U) In light of the debates on the War Powers Resolution, President Ford had attempted to secure appropriate authority before the evacuation of Americans and friendly nationals from Phnom Penh and Saigon. In his speech to Congress on 10 April 1975, he requested that Congress promptly revise the law to allow the evacuation of Vietnamese "to whom we have a very special obligation and whose lives may be endangered should the worst come to pass."²⁵² Congress was asked to complete all necessary legal actions by 19 April 1975. In spite of intense efforts and longer working hours by both the legislators and members of the executive, Congress was not able to accommodate the President's request, overcome as it was by the rush of events.

(U) A Senate Democratic caucus, held on 14 April, vigorously opposed the use of U.S. troops to evacuate "non-Americans" from embattled South Vietnam, but accepted the limited use of troops to rescue Americans.²⁵³ Because of the deep concern expressed by members of the Foreign Relations Committee, the Committee requested an extraordinary meeting with the President, who agreed. The session was held at the White House that evening, the first meeting of a President with the entire Foreign Relations Committee since the days of President Woodrow Wilson.

(U) On 15 April, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee tentatively endorsed a proposal for a \$200 million contingency fund that President Ford could use to evacuate Americans from Saigon and to provide humanitarian aid to the South Vietnamese.²⁵⁴ The proposal was sent to the Executive Branch where it was expected to be accepted. Secretary Kissinger had earlier indicated to the committee that the Administration was prepared to accept the concept of a "contingency fund" that the President could use at his discretion for humanitarian and military aid along with the withdrawal of Americans.

(U) With time rapidly running out for Congress to meet the President's deadline, the House International Relations Committee, on 18 April, approved legislation to give the President limited authority to use U.S. forces to evacuate Americans in South Vietnam.²⁵⁵ The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, on the other hand, withheld action on a similar bill because its members were dissatisfied with the pace at which Americans were being evacuated. Five days later, President Ford seemed to be adjusting to the inevitability of events as he called for an end to the recriminations over the Vietnam war, concluding, in an address in New Orleans, that the war was finished--"as far as America is concerned."²⁵⁶ On the same day, the Senate approved legislation giving the President limited authority to use U.S. troops in Saigon. The House seemed to be moving toward the passage of a similar legislation in an evening session.

(U) Although the House Rules Committee, on 28 April, cleared the way for final floor action on the bill to give President Ford limited authority

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to use troops, the debate and inaction in Congress had stymied the opportunity for prompt Legislative-Executive cooperation in the exercise of war powers.²⁵⁷ As a result, President Ford executed Operation Frequent Wind on 29/30 April, evacuating 1,373 Americans and 6,433 foreign nationals from South Vietnam, without the authority he had sought on 10 April 1975.

(U) In reviewing these events, Senator Eagleton castigated Congress for shirking its duty. On 6 May 1975, he wrote, in an article for the New York Times:²⁵⁸

From the beginning the debate over the President's request for "clarification" was marked by distrust of the executive branch, fear of military re-involvement in Vietnam, and a conspicuous lack of confidence that a law, however tightly drafted, would be faithfully executed. In the end, liberals, long disenchanted by the imperial Presidency they helped to create, unintentionally threw their considerable weight in the direction of Presidential omnipotence.

He concluded his criticism of the lack of congressional responsibility by citing the lack of even "ex post facto" authorization for the Vietnam evacuation."

UNRAVELING OF POLITICAL/MILITARY ARRANGEMENTS IN THAILAND

~~(S GDS 83)~~ The U.S. failure to respond with its military forces against the Communist offensives in Vietnam and Cambodia, followed by the fall of the two countries in April 1975, contributed directly to the unraveling U.S. foreign policy in Thailand. The AmEmb in Bangkok, with Charge d'affaires Edward E. Masters as Acting Chief of the Mission, informed the State Department on 1 May 1975 that Thai nationalistic sentiment, popular mistrust of the old military governments which concluded ill-defined agreements with the United States, and skepticism of the usefulness of U.S. military presence accelerated the shredding of relations.²⁵⁹ Agreeing with the Embassy analysis of October 1974, Masters repeated that the United States had enjoyed for many years extensive working arrangements with the Thai Government on U.S. military and intelligence presence in the country. This "skein of agreements," which were often drawn up in secrecy and not formalized in writing, had begun to break apart.

(U) Earlier in the year, the short administration of Seni Pramoj and the new government of Kukrit Pramoj, which were formed after the general election in January 1975, had made it a matter of policy to remove all U.S. forces from Thailand. Prime Minister Seni, on 3 March, had declared plans to have U.S. forces withdrawn from Thailand within 18 months.²⁶⁰ Just three weeks later, Seni's successor and younger brother,

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Kukrit Pramoj, pledged to work as Prime Minister to have American forces withdrawn within one year.²⁶¹ Although these announcements were a surprising indication of the worsening Thai sentiments toward U.S. military presence, U.S. Government officials still hoped for arrangements which would provide a residual force in Thailand.

~~(C CDS 83)~~ After the fall of Vietnam on 30 April 1975 and the generally universal recognition of American unwillingness to stand firm in SE Asia, Charge Masters retained a glimmer of hope for mutual cooperation in international security affairs with Thailand, despite the seriously frayed working arrangements. He sketched the circumstances:²⁶²

The clear message is that any oral agreements or secret written agreements which the RTG made with us prior to Oct 73 may no longer stand up when we try to invoke them, regardless of their merits or legality. We must therefore avoid as much as possible any direct confrontations, and recognize that we will be operating here under less and less favorable circumstances. Our privileges and immunities will be coming under particular fire. We will necessarily have to "settle out of court," at high cost, in certain cases. Whenever any potentially troublesome issue arises, we should be prepared to settle it promptly and not risk its escalation to a national political issue by standing too rigidly on rights or on principle. The alternative could well be to close up shop and get out.

~~(C CDS 83)~~ At the same time, Masters did not visualize the immediate termination of cooperation on security matters even though the Thai Government showed a marked unwillingness to come to the defense of the United States in any confrontations over various secret agreements. The AmEmb did not expect much of the Thai "in any case where delicate Thai national political interests might be at stake."

UNCERTAINTIES OF U.S. COMMITMENTS TO SE ASIA AND THE ADJUSTMENT TO THAI DISPLEASURE

(U) As it turned out, force reductions in Thailand were determined by enemy capabilities and the rush of events that both CINCPACAF and COMUSSAG had anticipated in August 1973. The capitulation of South Vietnam to NVA forces without the United States rising to the defense of the invaded country undercut any credibility remaining in the deterrent effect of USAF forces in Thailand. However, earlier in 1975, planning had continued as if the deterrence of U.S. forces were viable. It was not until early April that Washington planners could see clearly that there would be little long term need for Hq USSAG/7AF.

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~~(C 8DS 89)~~ On 12 March 1975, USSAG/7AF had responded to CINCPAC's request for comments and recommendations on forces, basing, and withdrawal plans which would satisfy JCS decisions made on 14 February 1975. CINCPAC also sought recommendations for either the retention or phasedown of USSAG/7AF itself, in a programmed situation where there would be about 17,300 USAF personnel in Thailand at the end of FY75.²⁶³

~~(C 8DS 82)~~ Hq USSAG/7AF had noted that the planned near term force reductions did not reduce the requirement for a multi-service, regionally oriented headquarters. The rapidly changing military situation in SE Asia required, in addition to the primary mission of being ready to conduct air operations as directed by national authority, the continuation of other USSAG activities such as the management of logistical support of the Khmer Republic by airlift and Mekong River convoy, all-source intelligence analysis and support, guidance to DAO and MEDTC, control of reconnaissance, and collateral functions such as Non-Combatant Emergency Evacuation (NEMVAC) planning and execution. On the other hand, the retention of USSAG/7AF did not require the extension of 7AF beyond its planned disestablishment of 30 June 1975.

~~(C 8DS 83)~~ USSAG/7AF had also commented that it was an opportunity for cleaning up the lines of command, for gaining efficiencies in operations, and achieving manpower savings. First, there were several reasons for transferring the dual-hatted and single-hatted 7AF functions and manning into an existing or newly-established USAF command element. Such an absorption of responsibilities was necessary because of the assigned mission of USSAG/7AF, the composition of the headquarters and the forces it was called upon to operate, and the "inseparable duality of function" which was required of most of the staff. From yet another perspective, the placement of residual 7AF command responsibilities within the overall command structure for SE Asia should be in consonance with the overall PACAF reorganization, the planning of which was being undertaken with haste at the time. As for Hq USSAG/7AF itself, the continuation of the dual-hatted nature of its staff was considered essential for discharging both joint and service responsibilities.²⁶⁴

~~(C 8DS 82)~~ Taking USSAG/7AF's suggestions, CINCPAC forwarded his recommendations on an increasingly uncertain assumption that the political concurrence of the Thai Government on U.S. military force levels would result. On 21 March 1975, CINCPAC advised the JCS that the eventual disestablishment of USSAG/7AF should be event oriented, with its continuation until the political/military situation permitted its disestablishment on 30 April 1976. During this time the force level in Thailand would be reduced from 21,000 to 12,000. The retention of USSAG/7AF during 1975 was dependent upon the continuation of the U.S. commitment to support South Vietnam and Cambodia, the requirement to "resurge/resume offensive air operations on short notice," and, obviously, the acceptability of U.S. military presence to the Thai. Any significant changes in these factors would require a reassessment of the need for Hq USSAG/7AF at the time. Of

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related interest, noted CINCPAC, was the Hq PACAF intention to modify the Air Force command structure in Thailand by inactivating 13AF ADVON and 7AF on 30 June 1975 and activating 17AD at U-Tapao with a liaison element at NKP to assume 7AF functions.²⁶⁵

~~(C GDS-83)~~ CINCPAC had other concerns in Thailand. He informed the JCS that he would like to modify his plans for disestablishing MACTHAI so that the action would follow USAF's phasedown, even though the original disestablishment of MACTHAI by the end of FY76 was still feasible. It was planned that the staff personnel and functions would be gradually reduced without eliminating the title of Hq USMACTHAI. CINCPAC took note of the important fact that no status-of-forces agreement (SOFA) existed in Thailand, with no likelihood of immediately concluding one. In the complex legal negotiations which could arise during withdrawal, CINCPAC thought it wise to maintain a consistent identity and a single point of contact with the Thai representatives.²⁶⁶

~~(C GDS-83)~~ In addition, CINCPAC recommended that Ramasun Station be retained as a first priority intelligence resource. The continuation of U-2 operations would require the movement of the ground terminal from NKP to Ramasun Station when USSAG/7AF was disestablished.

~~(C GDS-83)~~ Convinced that changes were coming, the National Command Authorities adjusted their thinking to the realities in Thailand by 27 March 1975.²⁶⁷ With the political developments in Thailand, including Prime Minister Kukrit's avowed intention of having U.S. forces removed in 12 months, the NCA instructed the JCS to urgently reexamine "with precision and as coldly as possible" whether, and to what extent, there were long term requirements for stationing U.S. forces in Thailand which were not related to the potential combat requirements of the Indochina conflict. The JCS separated the forces required to support a potential renewal of hostilities in Indochina from those necessary to accomplish force objectives and strategy in the FY77-81 period. For latter purposes, the JCS plans stipulated that 10,000 spaces were necessary. Since the Thai might prefer the withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Thailand, the JCS thought it might be to the U.S. Government's advantage to "negotiate for a minimum required force level." This change in negotiating position was conveyed to CINCPAC and his command.

~~(C GDS-83)~~ With the momentum of planning now in the direction of quickly reducing U.S. presence in Thailand to a small force, all levels of the command structure in SE Asia began making the necessary changes. In Air Force channels, PACAF was informed of the likelihood of USSAG/7AF's demise by 30 June 1975. On 17 April 1975, CSAF commented on PACAF's 2 April recommendation for retaining 7AF until after the disestablishment of Hq PACAF (which did not occur).²⁶⁸ To begin with, there were no resources in the existing USAF program for either USSAG or 7AF beyond FY75. A second point militating against PACAF's recommendation was informal information gained by CSAF that the SecDef did not agree with the position that Hq

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USSAG/7AF be given life through 30 April 1976 and would recommend that the NKP headquarters be disestablished by 30 June 1975. This came as the result of a JCS recommendation, submitted on 28 March 1975, on extending USSAG/7AF through 30 April 1976 for planning purposes. CSAF advised that the final decision on U.S. force levels in Thailand and their associated command structure was expected before 1 May 1975. In conclusion, the Air Staff reported, "we plan to take no further action on your program change request pending NCA action on the entire issue."

(C ODS 83) In another planning conference, conducted by messages, COMUSSAG/7AF answered CINCPACAF's request for comments on the post FY75 SE Asia beddown posture.²⁶⁹ He recommended the immediate withdrawal of Thailand forces at a rate and "to a level commensurate with logistical constraints and US/RTG agreements," as soon as Frequent Wind* operations were completed. The NKP headquarters made these comments on 22 April, just 10 days following Eagle Pull, the evacuation of Americans and others from Cambodia. In this context, USSAG/7AF was recommended to be inactivated on 30 June 1975 as it had been recently discussed.

(C ODS 82) By 28 April, USAF command channels in the Pacific had learned that the JCS had approved the removal of all USAF combat forces from Thailand by 30 September 1975 and had recommended a force drawdown to 3,075 total spaces (1,610 USAF) by the end of FY76.²⁷⁰ Five days after completing Frequent Wind operations, on 5 May 1975, Hq USSAG/7AF recommended that Thailand forces be withdrawn in accordance with its 22 April criteria, outlined for Hq PACAF.²⁷¹ There was no change in its recommendation for disestablishing USSAG/7AF on 30 June 1975.

Recovery of the Mayaguez: More Strains on Thai Relations

(U) During the period in which USSAG/7AF's final activities were being discussed, the headquarters was required to stage-manage yet another contingency operation, the rescue of the hijacked U.S. cargo ship, the Mayaguez, and its crew from Khmer Communist control. The ship had been seized in international waters by a Cambodian gunboat in the afternoon of 12 May 1975 (Cambodia time) and the crew of 40 Americans and others of mixed nationality, imprisoned on a nearby island. The U.S. Government had reacted with the ordering of USAF air strikes on Cambodian naval vessels and Koh Tang Island, USN strikes against land installations, and a Marine landing assault on Koh Tang where the prisoners were thought to be held. Other operations involved USAF helicopter airlift of the Marines and additional TACAIR sorties. Apparently as the result of the initial USAF strikes and willingness of the U.S. forces to follow through, the Cambodian authorities were persuaded that the return of the crew would be in their best interests. The prisoners were returned along with five Thai fishermen, in the latter's fishing boat, at 10:08 AM on 15 May (local). The Marines regained control of the abandoned, and anchored, Mayaguez earlier the same morning.²⁷²

* (U) Frequent Wind--The evacuation of Americans and others by fixed wing aircraft and helicopters from South Vietnam before its fall on 30 Apr 75.

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(U) The Thai reaction to the recovery operations was not at all favorable since U-Tapao had been used as a staging base for the ground assault force of Marines, apparently without prior consultation with the Foreign Ministry. In the view of Prime Minister Kukrit, this was a violation of Thai sovereignty and a note of protest was delivered to the AmEmb Bangkok on 14 May.²⁷³ Kukrit maintained that the USG use of Thailand as a base of operations against Cambodia was not consistent with the good will existing between America and Thailand. On 16 May, the RTG followed up with another protest against the continued violation of Thai sovereignty, accompanied by talk of recalling the Thai Ambassador to the United States, Anant Panyarachun.²⁷⁴ According to newspaper accounts, the Thai Cabinet had also decided to review all existing agreements and treaties with the United States for the purpose of moving up the March deadline for the complete withdrawal of U.S. forces. After three days of sporadic anti-American demonstrations during which the Embassy gates with the American seal were defaced, an apology from the USG was delivered to Foreign Minister Chatchai Choonhaven by Charge Masters.* Prime Minister Kukrit expressed satisfaction with the formal U.S. apology.²⁷⁵

TERMINATION OF MILITARY REQUIREMENTS AND DISESTABLISHMENT

~~(C GDS 03)~~ On 16 May 1975, the JCS released CINCPAC from its sortie/surge requirements and carrier readiness posture outlined in FY74-80 planning guidance for SE Asia, cancelling the sortie requirements which had been tasked on USAF elements since 13 February 1974.²⁷⁶ The JCS explained that the relaxation of force response requirements was in recognition of the changed situation in Indochina. CINCPAC was cautioned, however, that the lifting of requirements was not to be construed as an authorization for the deployment of forces from Thailand. The deployments would be authorized by a separate directive.

~~(C GDS 03)~~ By June 1975, USSAG/7AF had begun final preparations for closing down. A previously coordinated concept plan for disestablishment had been provided Hq PACAF on 8 November 1974. Two months later, on 29 January 1975, PACAF had forwarded the concept plan to CINCPAC. On 23 May 1975, PACAF had requested that USSAG/7AF provide another update of the plan, which the latter provided on 2 June 1975.²⁷⁷

~~(C GDS 03)~~ Hq USSAG/7AF observed that the fall of Cambodia and Vietnam had eliminated most of USSAG/7AF's functional responsibilities. The few that remained in June were already in the process of being transferred to other agencies or were to be eliminated in the near future. For

**(U) Charge d'Affaires Edward E. Masters was accompanied to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by Ambassador-Designate Charles S. Whitehouse who had not yet presented his credentials. Whitehouse remained outside in an Embassy car.*

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example, the responsibility for Buffalo Hunter* film transport had been negated by the impending withdrawal or consolidation of all Buffalo Hunter operations at one location. In computer support, USSAG/7AF personnel were already on TDY to PACAF, explaining the manner of preparing fragmentary orders. At the same time, 13AF personnel were on TDY to USSAG/7AF, studying the mechanics of manual fragging. In addition, the transfer of computer card decks to Intelligence Center Pacific (IPAC) had already begun and action was taken to release the computers to IBM on 1 July 1975.²⁷⁸

~~(C GDS 89)~~ The requirement for contingency air operations planning had also been virtually eliminated by what had occurred in SE Asia. Prime Hit had been cancelled and relief from remaining plans, also rendered obsolete by events, was expected momentarily. USSAG/7AF reported that the only remaining significant responsibility was in planning and executing Laos NEMVAC. The arrangements for the transfer of this function were under way with PACAF/13AF and were to take place not later than 30 June. USSAG/7AF recommended that this occur about 15 June to allow some time between the transfer and disestablishment. Other responsibilities such as intelligence, SAR, and air defense would automatically revert to joint or unilateral USAF channels without any coordination actions. USSAG/7AF concluded that the disestablishment of the headquarters was now merely an administrative action involving the disposition of personnel, records, and equipment.²⁷⁹

~~(C GDS 82)~~ With the reduction of U.S. forces proceeding apace, the USG kept the Royal Thai Government informed of all planned actions. On 12 June 1975, the Secretary of State advised the AmEmb Bangkok to inform the RTG of specific reductions in numbers of aircraft at U-Tapao, Korat, Udorn, Nakhon Phanom, and the intention of the United States to disestablish USSAG/7AF (428 spaces), 7AF (101 spaces), and 13AF ADVON (55 spaces) by the end of FY75. The USAF plan would establish an air division which would be located ultimately at U-Tapao. During the period of consultations with the Thai, the State Department desired no public discussion of the reductions and hoped that the RTG would cooperate in the matter. The Secretary also cautioned that "in accordance with long-standing USG practice, no . . . movements will begin until you have consulted with the RTG and obtained its approval."²⁸⁰

(U) These consultations were followed by a public announcement. At about 11:00 AM on 17 June 1975, the Embassy delivered a proposed public announcement to the Thai Supreme Command. This was released by the two countries:²⁸¹

Following the June 2, 1975, meeting of the Thai-U.S. Coordinating Committee, it was announced that all remaining B-52s and F-111s in Thailand would be withdrawn. Most of

* (U) Buffalo Hunter--A SAC reconnaissance operation.

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those planes have now departed and the others are in the process of leaving.

Representatives of the two governments have agreed to further withdrawals which will complete the reduction of 7,500 authorized U.S. military positions in Thailand by about June 30, 1975, as previously announced.

(U) The media was informed that USSAG/7AF, with its headquarters at Nakhon Phanom RTAFB, would be disestablished. At Udorn RTAFB, the Training and Logistics Detachment of the U.S. Military Assistance Command would also be closed. These would be accompanied by the redeployment of almost 90 aircraft, along with their flight and maintenance crews. Scheduled to depart by 30 June were 24 F-4s and 18 RF-4s from Udorn RTAFB, 20 OV-10s, and two CH-53s from NKP RTAFB, 9 AC-130s from Korat RTAFB, and 12 KC-135s and 2 C-130s from U-Tapao RTNAF.²⁸²

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(U) Two of the Air Force's major roles in SE Asia were brought to a close with the disestablishment of USSAG/7AF at 1700Z on 30 June 1975.²⁸³ Seventh Air Force, an organization with a long and illustrious history, ended more than nine years of duty in SE Asia.²⁸⁴ In its unique functions as a multi-service headquarters, USSAG/7AF firmly established a reputation for CINCPAC and USAF that effective command and control of all services could be maintained in closely supporting U.S. policies in rapidly changing circumstances.

The policy-maker must understand that the critic is obliged to stress imperfections in order to challenge assumptions and to goad actions. But equally the critic should acknowledge the complexity and inherent ambiguity of the policy-maker's choices. The policy-maker must be concerned with the best that can be achieved, not just the best that can be imagined. He has to act in a fog of incomplete knowledge without the information that will be available later to the analyst.

Henry A. Kissinger

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APPENDIX I

THE WAR POWERS RESOLUTION:
A REVIEW OF SOME ISSUES

(U) In 1800, the Supreme Court had been asked to decide whether the United States was at war at the time that an American ship was rescued from the French (Bas v. Tingy).²⁸⁵ The Court ruled that Congress had placed the United States at war, even though it was a limited one, and that it had the right to do so. The opinions of the justices in the case were of interest not only for their applicability to war powers, but also because they contained some of the earliest definitions of "limited war" in which the United States was involved. Justice Bushrod Washington wrote:²⁸⁶

But hostilities may subsist between two nations, more confined in its nature and extent; being limited as to places, persons, and things; and this is more properly termed imperfect war; because not solemn, and because those who are authorized to commit hostilities, act under special authority, and can go farther than to the extent of their commission. Still, however, it is a public war, because it is an external contention by force between some of the members of two nations, authorized by the legitimate powers. It is a war between the two nations, though all the members are not authorized to commit hostilities such as in a solemn war, where the government restrains the general power.

The "imperfect war" was contrasted with a "perfect" one in which "one whole nation was at war with another and all the members of the nation declaring war were "authorized to commit hostilities against all the members of the other, in every place, and under every circumstance." If the war was declared in form, according to Washington, it was called "solemn." Legal recognition of limited, undeclared wars of the Vietnam-type, therefore, existed as early as 1800.

(U) The decisions of the Bas case were the first Supreme Court interpretations of the range of Congressional powers in declaring and circumscribing hostilities.²⁸⁷ Adjudged at nearly the same time was the Talbot v. Seeman case, which resulted in the first judicial determination of which branch of government was required to bear the responsibility for taking the nation into either full-scale or limited hostilities. In the Talbot case, the newly appointed Chief Justice John Marshall wrote:

The whole powers of war being, by the constitution of the United States vested in Congress, the acts of that body can alone be resorted to as our guides in this inquiry. It is not

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denied, nor in the course of the argument has it been denied, that congress may authorize general hostilities, in which case the general laws of war, so far as they actually apply to our situation, must be noticed.

By these early Supreme Court decisions, the foundations were established for later interpretations of the war-making powers. From these times, the Supreme Court held that the powers of entering into an offensive war were vested in the Congress alone.

(U) Senator Eagleton emphasized that these powers included the authority to declare "either general or narrowly limited hostilities."²⁸⁸ He maintained, as did many legislators of the early 1970s, that "Presidential authority to take offensive action under the guise of his power as commander in chief arose only after Congress had acted." The Executive Branch, however, did not agree.

(U) Representative Zablocki's resolution, along with Senator Javits' bill, S.731, Senator Eagleton's joint resolution, S.J. Res. 59, Senator John C. Stennis' joint resolution, S.J. Res. 95, and others, became the bases for the extended debate on war powers. After modifications and conference committee meetings, the War Powers Resolution, Public Law 93-148 was passed, over Presidential veto, on 7 November 1973.²⁸⁹ Section 2 of the law stated its purpose and policy:

(a) It is the purpose of this joint resolution to fulfill the intent of the framers of the Constitution of the United States and insure that the collective judgement of both the Congress and the President will apply to the introduction of the United States Armed Forces into hostilities, or into situations where imminent involvement in hostilities is clearly indicated by the circumstances, and to the continued use of such forces in hostilities or in such situations. (b) Under article I, section 8, of the Constitution, it is specifically provided that the Congress shall have the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying into execution, not only its own powers but also all other powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any department or officer thereof. (c) The constitutional powers of the President as Commander-in-Chief to introduce United States Armed Forces into hostilities, or into situations where imminent involvement in hostilities is clearly indicated by the circumstances, are exercised only pursuant to (1) a declaration of war, (2) specific statutory authorization, or (3) a national emergency created by attack on the United States, its territories or possessions, or its armed forces.

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(U) The resolution also prescribed that in the absence of a declaration of war where U.S. Armed Forces are introduced into hostilities, the President was required to report to both houses of Congress on the circumstances necessitating the introduction of armed forces, the authority for pursuing such courses of action, and the anticipated scope of the duration of the involvement. Those who sought to restore to Congress the power to commit armed forces into hostilities were disappointed that the resolution gave the President "more discretionary authority than the framers of the Constitution intended."²⁹⁰ On the other hand, the Chief Executive at the time of the passage of the resolution, President Nixon, was extremely disappointed because he thought that it seriously undermined the nation's ability to "act decisively and convincingly in times of international crisis."²⁹¹

(U) When he vetoed the War Powers Resolution on 24 October 1973, President Nixon did so because he felt that the resolution was unconstitutional, that it undermined the foreign policy of the United States, and it neglected to require Congress to take responsible action.²⁹² The events of early 1975 lent credence to two-thirds of Nixon's fears. One of the provisions of the law which was labeled "unconstitutional" was Section 4(c). It provided that an action by the President committing U.S. troops to hostilities or into areas where hostilities were imminent could be terminated by both Houses of Congress acting through a concurrent resolution. President Nixon maintained that the concurrent resolution did not normally have the force of law, "since it denied the President his constitutional role in approving legislation." Congress believed, to the contrary, that there was ample precedent for the use of a concurrent resolution to "veto" or disapprove a future action of the President, "which action was previously authorized by a joint resolution or bill."²⁹³

(U) The provision automatically cutting off certain authorities after 60 days unless they were extended by Congress was attacked because it could serve to prolong or intensify a crisis.²⁹⁴ President Nixon reasoned that an adversary would take advantage of the expectation that the United States would possibly withdraw in a confrontation within the 60-day period. "Until the Congress suspended the deadline. . . an adversary would be tempted therefore to postpone serious negotiations until the 60 days were up." The strong incentive to negotiate would come after the 60 days; escalation of hostilities would come before the deadline so as to gain certain advantages while there was time.

(U) Nixon argued in his veto message that the suspension of certain Presidential powers as Commander in Chief, after 60 days without Congressional action, was not a means of strengthening cooperation between the Executive and Legislative Branches.²⁹⁵ It appeared as if Congress was attempting to increase its policy-making role without taking affirmative action. The President stressed, "I do not. . . believe that the Congress can responsibly contribute its considered, collective judgment on such

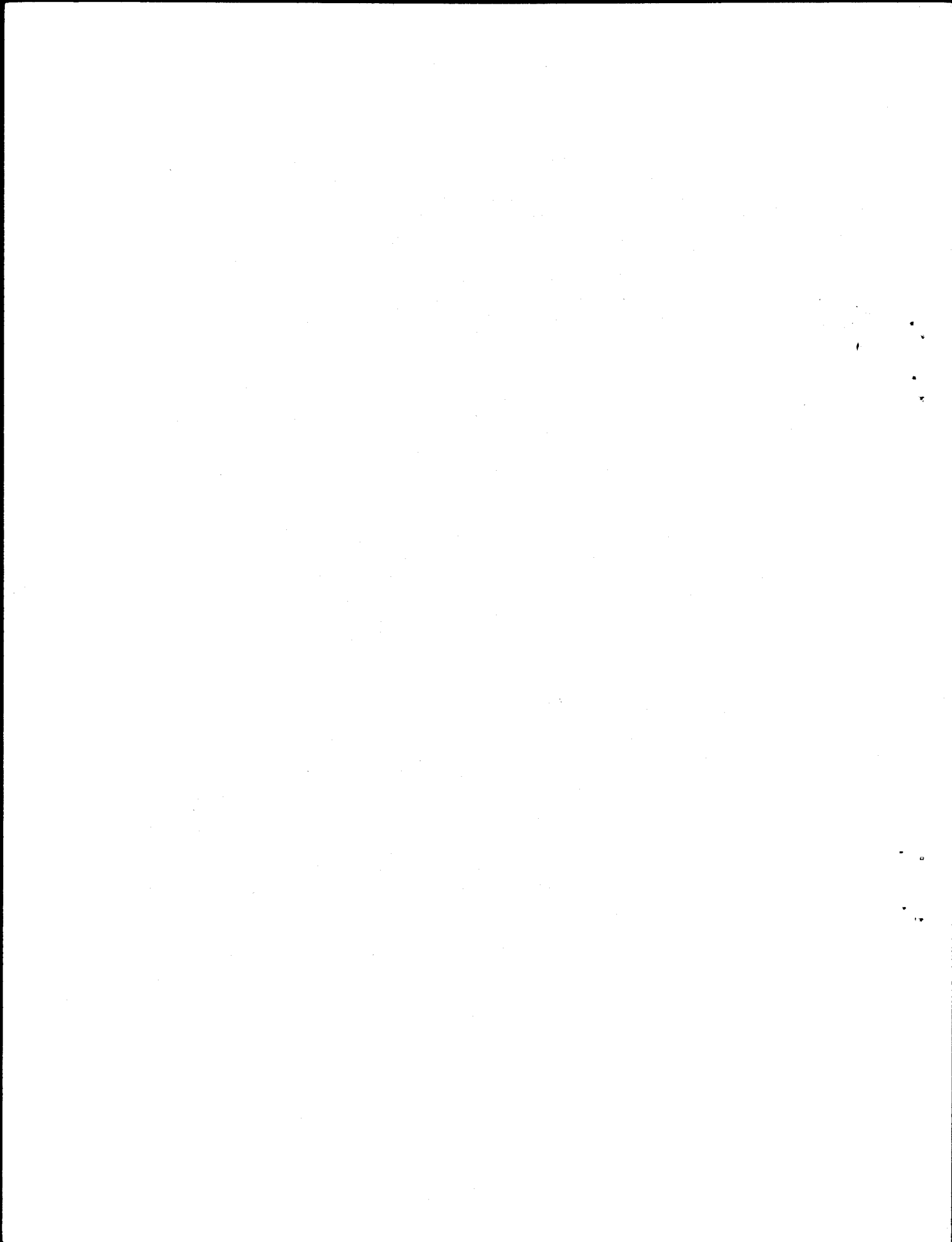
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grave questions without full debate. . . ." In a conciliatory approach to the Congress, prompted at least in part by the debilitating effects the Watergate scandal and the resignation of the Vice President upon his Administration, President Nixon called for the establishment of a "non-partisan commission on the constitutional roles of the Congress and the President in the conduct of foreign affairs," so that constructive measures contained in the House Joint Resolution, dealing with improved flow of information between the Executive and Legislative Branches, would be preserved.²⁹⁶ This recommendation would likely have fallen on more receptive ears had it been made in the months following the recovery of the Mayaguez--and by a different President.

(U) In spite of the serious objections to the War Powers Resolution raised by the President and the adverse impact he predicted it would have on foreign relations, the quarrelsome discussions were made so both by rhetoric and by the real, substantive issues involved. Immediately following the passage of the resolution, the New York Times concluded editorially:²⁹⁷

The war powers bill itself is not the revolutionary measure that Mr. Nixon and other critics have attempted to make it out to be. It does not in any way curtail the President's freedom, as Commander in Chief, to respond to emergency situations. If anything, it gives the Chief Executive more discretionary authority than the framers of the Constitution intended in order to deal with modern contingencies that they could not have foreseen.

(U) The New York Times' contention that the resolution did not curtail the President as Commander in Chief was generally supported by the Department of State on 1 December 1973 when it answered Senator Eagleton's request for the Department's legal interpretation of the newly enacted law.²⁹⁸ State wrote that it was their opinion that "Section 2(c) does not constitute a legally binding definition of the President's Constitutional power as Commander in Chief." Moreover, noted the State Department, "Section 2 does not contain language which requires or prohibits any particular action. . . ." At the time, the Department of State reported it was still studying the implications of the "operative sections of the bill" which dealt with consultation, reporting, and Congressional authority to continue a war beyond 90 days. Eagleton concluded that it was problematical whether or not the President would decide to abide by these legally binding sections or challenge them as unconstitutional.



NOTES

1. Dept of State Bulletin, Vol LXXII, No. 1872, "Secretary Kissinger Interviewed for L'Express of France," conducted at the Dept of State on 12 Apr 75, 12 May 75, pp 606-7.

2. Thomas F. Eagleton, War and Presidential Power, A Chronicle of Congressional Surrender (New York, 1974). [Hereafter Eagleton, War and Presidential Power]

3. U.S. Code, Congressional and Administrative News, 93d Congress, 1st Session, 1973, Vol 2, pp 2349-50.

4. Roland A. Paul, American Military Commitments Abroad, (Rutgers Univ Press, 1973), p 11.

5. U.S. Code, Congressional and Administrative News, 91st Congress, 1st Session, 1969, Vol I, p 508. The law was approved on 29 Dec 69.

6. DOD Appropriation Acts, for FY71 (PL 91-668, Sec 843); for FY72 (PL 92-204, Title VII, Gen Prov, Sec 742); and for FY73 (PL 92-570, Sec 741).

7. Eagleton, War and Presidential Power, p 112.

8. Hearings Before the Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, 93d Congress, 2d Session, Statement of Information, Book XI, Bombing of Cambodia, May-Jun 74, p 396.

9. U.S. Code, Congressional and Administrative News, 92d Congress, 2nd Session, 1972, Vol 2, Legislative History, pp 1901-02; and Vol I, Laws, p 2341.

10. Ibid.

11. Intvw, Capt Fredrick T. De Ronda and Mr Claude G. Morita, Proj CHECO, with Col Robert G. Patterson, Jr., Ch, AF Div, MEDTC, on 7 May 75. The legislation was not entirely successful in attempting to draw a fine line for advisory assistance which the U.S. military personnel were to adhere to. In a practical sense, it was contradictory to insist that the military equipment being delivered to the Khmer forces by the United States under hazardous conditions was not to be construed as a commitment by the United States to Cambodia.

12. U.S. Code, Congressional and Administrative News, 92d Congress, 2d Session 1972, Vol 2, pp 1901-02.

13. U.S. Code, Congressional and Administrative News, Vol 1, Laws, (92d Congress, 2d Session 1972), pp 34-5.

14. Intvw (C-GDS-81), Maj Paul E. Elder, CHECO; Gen John W. Vogt, Jr., COMUSSAG/7AF, on 20 Jul 73, p 4-5. (CMR S-899, 170)

15. Ibid.

16. AmEmb Bangkok Memorandum of Conversation (C-XGDS-3-UNBO), subj: The Church Amendment and U.S. Commitments, Participants: Dr Thanat Khoman, Sen Jacob Javits, Amb Leonard Unger, Mr Albert Lakeland, Exec Asst to the Sen, and Mr William Stokes, 21 Jan 70. [Hereafter Memorandum of Conversation]

17. Hearings, U.S. Security Agreements and Commitments Abroad, Kingdom of Thailand, "Joint Statement by Foreign Minister Thanat Khoman of Thailand and SecState Dean Rusk at Washington, D.C., on Mar 6, 1962," p 676.

18. Memorandum of Conversation (C-XGDS-3-UNBO).

19. Ibid.

20. Msg, SecState to All East Asian & Pacific Diplomatic Posts, subj: Church Amendment to the Military Appropriations Act, State 042150, undated [received in Bangkok on 24 Mar 70].

21. Ibid.

22. AmEmb Bangkok Paper (C-GDS-82), subj: Testing Time for US/Thai Relations, 17 Jun 74, p 11.

23. Msg, SecState to All East Asian & Pacific Diplomatic Posts, subj: Church Amendment to the Military Appropriations Act, State 042150, undated [received in Bangkok on 24 Mar 70].

24. Ibid.

25. Eagleton, War and Presidential Power, p 112.

26. Msg, SecState to All East Asian & Pacific Diplomatic Posts, subj: Church Amendment to the Military Appropriations Act, State 042150, undated [received in Bangkok on 24 Mar 70].

27. Memo, U.S. Embassy Bangkok, POMIL, Mr G. F. Muller, from POMIL, M. T. Finch, subj: Air War in SE Asia, 22 Feb 73.

28. Ibid.

29. Dept of State Bulletin, Vol LXVII, No. 1769, "Department Discusses Presidential Authority to Continue U.S. Air Combat Operations in Cambodia," statement submitted to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations by Secy Rogers on 30 Apr 73, 21 May 73, pp 652-55.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Eagleton, War and Presidential Power, pp 154-55.

33. Msg (C-GDS-79), COMUSMACV to 7AF/CC, subj: Transfer of Function, 120730Z Sep 71.

34. Proj CORONA Harvest End-of-Tour Report (C-GDS-82), Col John F. Nuding, USAF, Dir of Programs, DCS/Plans, Hq 7AF, 12 Jul 71-30 Jul 72.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

37. Hq USMACV Command History (TS-XGDS-2&3-02) Jan 72-Mar 73, Vol II, Chronology, 15 Jul 73 (material used is U). Gen Vogt became Commander, 7AF, on 11 Apr 72, succeeding Lt Gen Marvin L. McNickle.

38. Intvw (C-GDS-81), Claude G. Morita, 7AF Historian, with Gen John W. Vogt, Jr., COM7AF and DEPCOMUSMACV, on 25 Jan 73 [cited hereafter as Vogt Intvw].

39. Intvw (S-NF-XGDS-3-02), Claude G. Morita, 7AF Historian, with Maj Gen Winton W. Marshall, Vice Commander, 7AF, on 7 Sep 72.

40. Vogt Intvw (C-GDS-81).

41. Ibid.

42. Msg (C-GDS-82), COMUSMACV to CINCPAC, subj: Contingency Withdrawal Planning, 270345Z Nov 72, retransmitted by CINCPAC, 282358Z Nov 72. This message appears to be the first MACV reference to the functionally more accurate title, "Hq MACV/7AF." (CMR TS-244, 014.1)

43. Department of State Bulletin, Vol LXVII, No. 1771, "U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970s, Shaping a Durable Peace," by President Richard M. Nixon on 3 May 73, 4 Jun 73, p 738. The USMACV Command History, Jan 72-Mar 73, Vol II, Chronology, indicates that the 3d Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, the last ground combat unit, stood down on 11 Aug 72.

44. Msg (C-GDS-82), CINCPACAF to 7AF, subj: Contingency Withdrawal Planning, 040400Z Nov 72; msg (C-GDS-82), CINCPACAF to CINCPAC, subj: Contingency Withdrawal Planning, 010810Z Nov 72, retransmitted by CINCPACAF 022200Z Nov 72. (CMR TS-244, 001)

45. Msg (C-GDS-82), COMUSMACV to CINCPAC, subj: Contingency Withdrawal Planning, 011200Z Nov 72.

46. USMACV Command History (TS-XGDS-2&3-02), Vol II, Jan 72-Mar 73, Annex G, "New Agencies," p G-2 (material used is U).

47. Msg (C-GDS-82), CINCPACAF to CINCPAC, subj: Contingency Withdrawal Planning, 010810Z Nov 72, retransmitted by CINCPACAF to 7AF, 022200Z Nov 72. (CMR TS-244, 001)

48. Ibid.

49. Msg (C-GDS-82), CINCPAC to JCS, subj: Contingency Withdrawal Planning, 050001Z Nov 72.

50. Msg (C-GDS-82), JCS to CINCPAC, subj: Changes in Existing Procedures in Thailand, 242305Z Nov 72, retransmitted by CINCPAC to CINCPACAF, 282357Z Nov 72. (CMR TS-244, 014). This cites JCS msg 4825/220021Z Nov 72 which provided the basic authority.

51. Msg (C-GDS-82), COMUSMACV to CINCPAC, subj: Contingency Withdrawal Planning, 270345Z Nov 72, retransmitted by CINCPAC, 282358Z Nov 72. (CMR TS-244, 014.1)

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid.

54. Ibid.

55. Ibid.

56. Msg (C-GDS-82), COMUSMACV to CINCPAC, subj: Changes to Existing Procedures in Thailand, 050815Z Dec 72, retransmitted by CINCPAC, 052120Z Dec 72. (CMR TS-244, 030.0)

57. Ibid.

58. Ibid.

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid.

61. Msg (C-GDS-82), CINCPAC to JCS, subj: Changes in Existing Procedures in Thailand, 082325Z Dec 72. (CMR TS-244, 014.9)

62. Msg (C-GDS-83), JCS to CINCPAC, subj: Changes in Existing Military Procedures in Thailand, 102313Z Jan 73, retransmitted by CINCPAC, 170323Z Feb 73. (CMR TS-244, 014.5) Hereafter, JCS msg 102313Z Jan 73.

63. Ibid.

64. This was readily deducible in message traffic, attendance at staff meetings, and in interviews with members of the staff at both Hq MACV/7AF and 7AF. JCS msg 102313Z Jan 73 defined the purpose of Hq USSAG/7AF.

65. JCS msg 102313Z Jan 73.

66. Ibid.

67. Msg (C-GDS-84), SecState to AmEmb Bangkok, subj: Cease-fire Planning, 091936Z Dec 72. (CMR TS-198, 033)

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid.

70. 7 ACCSM 55-1 (C-GDS-81), Seventh Airborne Command and Control Manual, Airborne Battlestaff Operational Procedures, Ch 1, "Introduction," 29 May 73, pp 1-2. (CMR S-871, 100) It does not appear that a FANK liaison section was ever established at USSAG/7AF.

71. Msg (C-GDS-84), SecState to AmEmb Bangkok, subj: Cease-fire Planning, 091936Z Dec 72. (CMR TS-198, 033)

72. Ibid.

73. Msg (C-GDS-83), CINCPACAF to CINCPAC, subj: U.S. Operations in SEA, 060140Z Feb 73. (CMR TS-244, 026.1)

74. Ibid.

75. Msg (C-GDS-83), CINCPAC to COMUSMACV, subj: U.S. Operations in Southeast Asia, 090421Z Feb 73. (CMR TS-244, 026.0)

76. Msg (C-GDS-79), CINCPAC to JCS, subj: Revision to USSAG JTD, 090159Z Mar 73, retransmitted by CINCPAC, 100322Z Mar 73.

77. Msg (C-GDS-82), COMUSMACV to CINCPAC, subj: Changes to Existing Procedures in Thailand, 050815Z Dec 72, retransmitted by CINCPAC, 052120Z Dec 72. (CMR TS-244, 030.0)

78. Ibid

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79. Dept of State Bulletin, Vol LXVIII, No. 1771, "U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970s, Shaping a Durable Peace," a report to Congress by President Nixon, 4 Jun 73, p 744.

80. Msg, COMUSMACV to CINCPAC, subj: Change in Existing Procedures in Thailand, 090145Z Dec 72, retransmitted by CINCPAC, 092056Z Dec 72. (CMR TS-244, 015.0)

81. Msg (C-GDS-83), AFSSO USAF to AFSSO PACAF & AFSSO NKP, subj: Preparation for JCS Review of Follow-On SE Asia Command Arrangements, 222105Z Feb 73. (CMR TS-244, 022.5)

82. Ibid.

83. Msg (C-GDS-81), AmEmb Bangkok to SecState, subj: Country Clearance for JCRC and USSAG, 091245Z Feb 73, retransmitted by CSAF, 092117Z Feb 73.

84. Msg (C-GDS-81), JCS to CINCPAC, subj: U.S. Organizations in SE Asia, 202300Z Feb 73, retransmitted by CINCPAC, 230245Z Feb 73.

85. Msg (C-GDS-81), AmEmb Bangkok to SecState, subj: Country Clearance for JCRC and USSAG, 091245Z Feb 73, retransmitted by CSAF, 092117Z Feb 73.

86. Msg (C-GDS-81), JCS to CINCPAC, subj: U.S. Organizations in SE Asia, 202300Z Feb 73, retransmitted by CINCPAC, 230245Z Feb 73.

87. Msg (C-GDS-83), COMUSMACV to CINCPAC, subj: U.S. Operations in SE Asia, 310940Z Jan 73, retransmitted by CSAF, 011846Z Feb 73. (CMR TS-244, 027.8)

88. PACAF SO GA-7, 16 Feb 73.

89. Msg (C-GDS-83), COMUSMACV to CINCPAC, subj: Transfer of Major Functions from MACV to USSAG, 141030Z Feb 73. (CMR TS-244, 026.5)

90. Hq USSAG/7AF Command Briefing on Move from Saigon to NKP (C-GDS-83), 10 Apr 73. (CMR S-899, 148)

91. Msg (C-GDS-83), COMUSMACV to CINCPAC, subj: Transfer of Major Functions from MACV to USSAG, 141030Z Feb 73. (CMR TS-244, 026.5)

92. Ibid.

93. Hq USSAG/7AF Command Briefing on Move from Saigon to NKP (C-GDS-83), 10 Apr 73.

94. Ibid.

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95. Hq USSAG/7AF Command Briefing on Move from Saigon to NKP (C-GDS-83), 10 Apr 73.

96. Vogt Intvw (C-GDS-81).

97. Hq USSAG/7AF Command Briefing on Move from Saigon to NKP (C-GDS-83), 10 Apr 73.

98. Msg (C-GDS-83), AFSSO USAF to AFSSO PACAF & AFSSO NKP, subj: Preparation for the JCS Review of Follow-On SE Asia Command Arrangements, 222105Z Feb 73. (CMR TS-244, 022.5)

99. Ibid.

100. Msg (C-GDS-83), AFSSO PACAF to AFSSO USAF, subj: Follow-On Command Arrangements, 100034Z Mar 75. (CMR TS-244, 022.9)

101. Msg (C-GDS-82), COMUSMACV to CINCPAC, subj: Changes to Existing Procedures in Thailand, 050815Z Dec 72, retransmitted by CINCPAC, 052120Z Dec 72. (CMR TS-244, 030.0)

102. Msg (C-GDS-92), CINCPACAF to CINCPAC, subj: Existing Procedures in Thailand, 070430Z Dec 72. (CMR TS-244, 025.9)

103. Msg (C-GDS-81), AFSSO PACAF to AFSSO USAF, subj: 7/13AF Hq, 130322Z Mar 73.

104. Hq USSAG/7AF Command Briefing on Move from Saigon to NKP (C-GDS-83), 10 Apr 73.

105. Msg (C-GDS-81), CINCPAC to AmEmb Bangkok & Vientiane, subj: 7/13AF Headquarters, 242258Z Mar 73.

106. Msg, COMUSMACV to CINCPAC & JCS, subj: Disestablishment of U.S. Military Assistance Command Vietnam, 290915Z Mar 73.

107. CINCPAC retransmitted the information and formalized USSAG/7AF's functions and responsibilities in its terms of reference. USSAG/7AF followed suit with USSAG Manual 20-1, Organization and Functions, Hq USSAG, 15 May 73.

108. Msg (C-GDS-83), JCS to CINCPAC, subj: Changes in Existing Military Procedures in SE Asia, 152000Z Mar 73, retransmitted by CINCPAC, 180413Z Mar 73. (CMR TS-244, 015.1)

109. Msg (C-GDS-83), AFSSO USAF to AFSSO PACAF & AFSSO NKP, subj: Preparations for the JCS Review of Follow-On SE Asia Command Arrangements, 222105Z Feb 73. (CMR TS-244, 022.5)

110. Ibid.

111. Msg (C-GDS-83), AFSSO USAF to AFSSO PACAF & AFSSO NKP, subj: Preparations for the JCS Review of Follow-On SE Asia Command Arrangements, 222105Z Feb 73. (CMR TS-244, 022.5)

112. Project CHECO Report (S-NF-XGDS-3-98), Single Manager for Air in SVN, Warren A. Trest, 1 Jul 68, pp 1, 32, 61-62. [Hereafter, Single Manager for Air in SVN, Trest.] In an effort to placate USMC opposition to the arrangements, the DepSecDef went so far as to declare that what was occurring was not to be considered a precedent for other combat conditions.

113. Project CHECO Report (S-XGDS-3-98), Khe Sanh (Operation Niagara), 22 Jan - 31 Mar 68, Warren A. Trest, 13 Sep 68, pp 81, 112-114.

114. Single Manager for Air in SVN, Trest (S-NF-XGDS-3-98), p 11.

115. Ibid, p 12.

116. Project CHECO Report (S-XGDS-3-98), Single Manager for Air in SVN, Lt Col Robert M. Burch, 18 Mar 69, pp 7-8. [Hereafter, Single Manager for Air in SVN, Burch.]

117. Ibid, pp 49-52.

118. Ibid., pp 20-21.

119. Msg (C-GDS-83), AFSSO NKP to AFSSO PACAF, subj: Preparations for a JCS Review of Follow-On Southeast Asian Command Arrangements, 251055Z Feb 73. (CMR TS-244, 020.0)

120. Ibid.

121. Ibid.

122. Ibid.

123. Ibid.

124. Ibid.

125. Ibid.

126. Ibid.

127. Ibid.

128. Ibid.

129. Ibid.

130. Ibid.

131. Msg (C-GDS-83), AFSSO PACAF to AFSSO USAF, subj: Follow-On Command Arrangements, 100034Z Mar 73. (CMR TS-244, 022.9)

132. Ibid.

133. Ibid.

134. Msg (C-GDS-83), JCS to CINCPAC, subj: Changes in Existing Military Procedures in SE Asia, 152000Z Mar 73, retransmitted by CINCPAC, 180413Z Mar 73. (CMR TS-244, 015.1)

135. Msg (C-GDS-83), USSAG/7AF to CINCPAC, subj: Changes in Existing Military Procedures, 090930Z Apr 73. (CMR TS-244, 015.8)

136. Ibid.

137. Msg (S-GDS-84), USSAG/7AF to CINCPAC, subj: Tennis Racket, 230515Z Apr 74.

138. Msg (C-GDS-83), AFSSO PACAF to AFSSO USAF, subj: [integration of air assets in PACOM], 041930Z Apr 73. (CMR TS-244, 017.2) This message is the basis for the three paragraphs which follow.

139. Hist (C-GDS-83), DCS/Plans, 1-30 Apr 73.

140. Briefing Synopsis (C-GDS-83), Command Interface, Tennis Racket, CINCPACAF, 23 Apr 73.

141. Msg (C-GDS-83), USSAG/7AF to CINCPAC, subj: Tennis Racket, 230515Z Apr 74.

142. Msg (C-GDS-83), CINCPAC to JCS, subj: Planning for Thailand, 150647Z Sep 73. (CMR TS-224, 09) The next paragraph is also based on this message.

143. Ibid.

144. Msg (C-GDS-83), USSAG/7AF to CINCPAC, subj: Changes in Existing Military Procedures in Southeast Asia, 090930Z Apr 73. (CMR TS-244, 025.5)

145. Msg (C-GDS-83), AFSSO PACAF to AFSSO NKP, subj: SEA Command Arrangements, 220338Z Mar 73. (CMR TS-244, 024.0)

146. Ibid.

147. Ibid.

148. Ibid.

149. Msg (C-GDS-83), USSAG/7AF to CINCPAC, subj: Changes in Existing Military Procedures in SE Asia, 090930Z Apr 73. (CMR TS-244, 025.5)
150. Ibid.
151. Talking Paper (C-GDS-83), PACAF/XPPS, subj: USSAG/7AF, 30 Jul 73.
152. Eagleton, War and Presidential Powers, pp 141-183.
153. U.S. Code, Congressional and Administrative News, 93d Congress, First Session, 1973, Vol 1, West Publishing Co, St Paul, Minnesota, p 149.
154. U.S. Code, Congressional and Administrative News, 93d Congress, First Session, 1973, Vol 2, Legislative History, West Publishing Co, St Paul, Minnesota, p 2900.
155. Msg (C-GDS-81), SecDef to CJCS, subj: U.S. Military Activities in Laos and Cambodia, 040018Z Aug 74.
156. Ibid.
157. Ibid.
158. Msg, SecDef to CINCPAC, subj: U.S. Reconnaissance Flights Over Cambodia, 262131Z Nov 74, retransmitted by CINCPAC 280026Z Nov 74.
159. Ibid.
160. Washington Post, "U.S. Said to Pick Out Targets for Cambodians," by John Burgess, 22 Nov 74.
161. Msg, SecDef to CINCPAC, subj: U.S. Reconnaissance Flights Over Cambodia, 262131Z Nov 74, retransmitted by CINCPAC 280026Z Nov 74.
162. Msg (C-GDS-81), CSAF to CINCPACAF, subj: SEA Command Arrangements, 021907Z Aug 73.
163. Ibid.
164. Msg (C-GDS-83), CINCPAC Airborne to COMUSSAG, et al., subj: [U.S. activities after 14 Aug 73], 022000Z (incomplete), presumably Aug 73. (CMR TS-234, 079)
165. Msg (C-GDS-81), PACAF to 13AF & 7AF, subj: SEA Command Arrangements, 100330Z Aug 73.
166. Ibid.

167. Msg (C-GDS-81), CINCPACAF to CSAF, subj: Post-SEA Basing, 190315Z Jul 73.
168. Talking Paper (C-GDS-83), PACAF/XP, subj: USSAG/7AF, 15 Aug 73.
169. Msg (C-GDS-81), CINCPACAF to 13AF & 7AF, subj: SEA Command Arrangements, 100330Z Aug 73.
170. Talking Paper (C-GDS-83), PACAF/XP, subj: USSAG/7AF, 15 Aug 73.
171. Msg (C-GDS-83), CINCPAC to CINCSAC, et al., subj: Planning for Thailand, 112146Z Aug 73. (CMR TS-224, 12.5)
172. Msg (C-GDS-83), USSAG/7AF to CINCPAC, subj: Planning for Thailand, 240915Z Aug 73. (CMR TS-224, 11.5)
173. Ibid.
174. Ibid.
175. Ibid.
176. Ibid.
177. Ibid.
178. Msg (C-GDS-83), CINCPACAF/XP to CINCPAC/J5, subj: Planning for Thailand, 300405Z Aug 73.
179. Msg (C-GDS-81), AFSSO PACAF to AFSSO USAF, subj: SEA Command Arrangements, 300200Z Aug 73.
180. Ibid.
181. Msg (C-GDS-83), CINCUSARPAC to CINCPAC, subj: Planning for Thailand, 282219Z Aug 73. (CMR TS-244, 027.9)
182. Ibid.
183. Msg (C-GDS-83), CINCPAC to JCS, subj: Planning for Thailand, 060540Z Sep 73. (CMR TS-224, 011)
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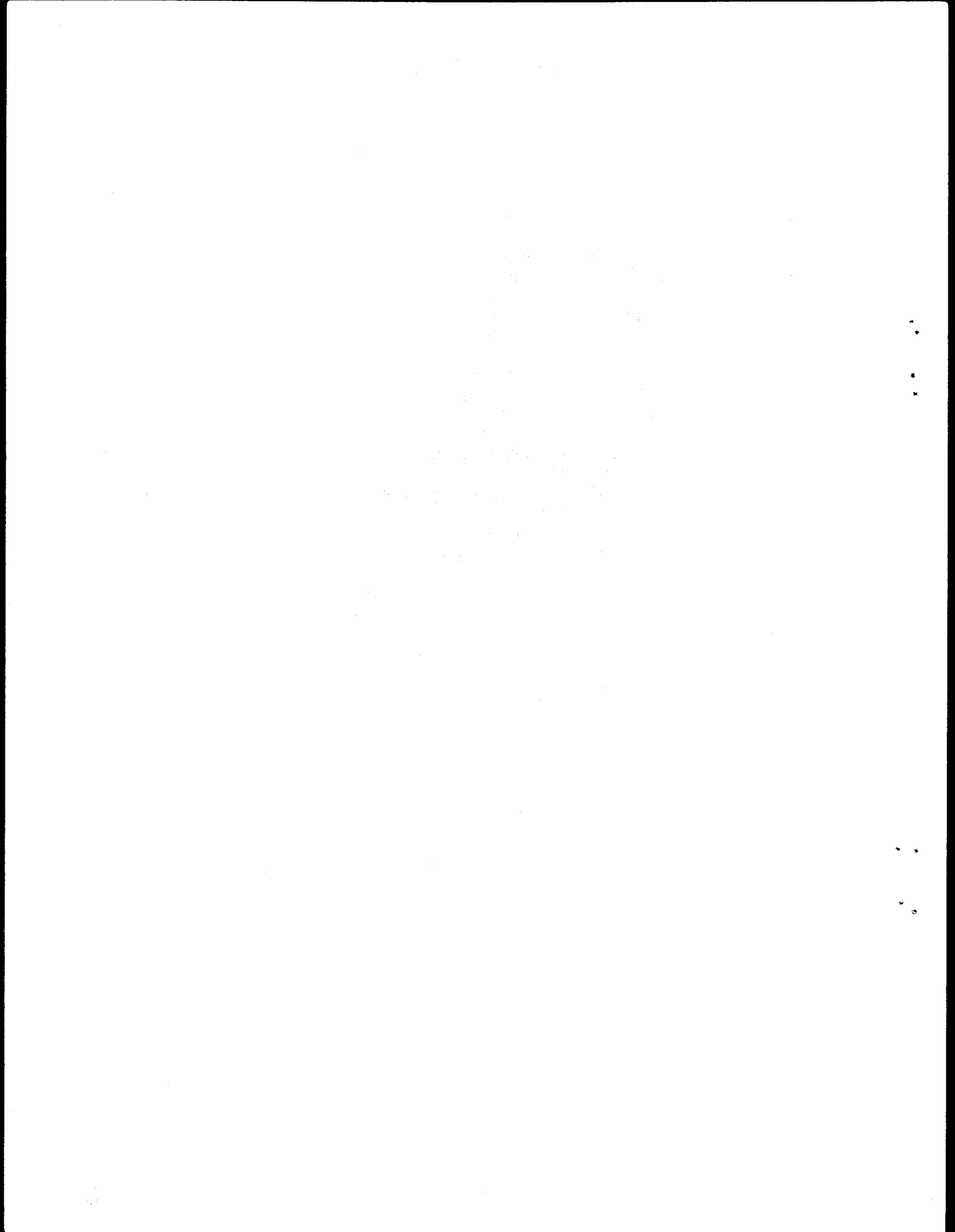
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GLOSSARY

ABCCC	airborne battlefield command and control center
ACS/O	assistant chief of staff for operations
ADVON	advanced echelon
AFSC	Air Force Systems Command
AFSSO	Air Force special security office
AmEmb	American Embassy
ARG	amphibious ready group
ARVN	Army of Republic of Vietnam
CINCPAC	Commander in Chief, Pacific
CINCPACAF	Commander in Chief, Pacific Air Forces
CINCPACFLT	Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet
CINCUSARPAC	Commander in Chief, U.S. Army, Pacific
CMR	CHECO microfilm roll
COMUSMACTHAI	Commander, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Thailand
COMUSMACV	Commander, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
COMUSSAG/7AF	Commander, U.S. Support Activities Group/Seventh Air Force
COSVN	Central Office for South Vietnam
CSAF	Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force
CTF	commander task force
CTZ	corps tactical zone
DAO	Defense Attache Office
DCS	deputy chief of staff
DEPCHJUSMAG	Deputy Chief, Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group
DOD	Department of Defense
DOS	Department of State
DRSTO	Defense Resource Support and Termination Office
DRV	Democratic Republic of Vietnam
ECM	electronic countermeasures
ELINT	electronic intelligence
FAC	forward air controller
FANK	Forces Armee Nationales Khmeres
frag	fragmentary operations order
FWMF	Free World military forces
FY	fiscal year
GOT	Government of Thailand

Hq	headquarters
ICCS	International Commission of Control and Supervision
ICOD	intelligence cut-off date
IPAC	Intelligence Center, Pacific
JCRC	Joint Casualty Resolution Center
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JGS	Joint General Staff
JMC	Joint Military Commission
JTD	joint table of distribution
JUSMAG	Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group
LOC	line of communication
MACTHAI	Military Assistance Command, Thailand
MACV	Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
MAF	Marine amphibious force
MAP	military assistance program
MAW	Marine air wing
MEDTC	Military Equipment Delivery Team, Cambodia
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MIG	Soviet fighter aircraft designed by Mikoyan and Gurevich
NCA	national command authorities
NEMVAC	non-combatant emergency evacuation
NKP	Nakhon Phanom (Royal Thai Air Force Base)
NVA	North Vietnamese Army
NVN	North Vietnam
PATMA	Pacific Area Traffic Management Agency
PD	program document
PIRAZ	positive identification radar advisory zone
PL	public law
POL	petroleum, oil and lubricants
POW	prisoner of war
PRC	People's Republic of China
PRG	People's Revolutionary Government

RP	route package
RTAF	Royal Thai Air Force
RTAFB	Royal Thai Air Force Base
RTG	Royal Thai Government
RTNAF	Royal Thai Navy Airfield
RVNAF	Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces
RVN	Republic of Vietnam
SAC	Strategic Air Command
SAM	surface to air missile
SAR	search and rescue
SEAC	Southeast Asia Command
SEASC	Southeast Asia Support Command
SE Asia	Southeast Asia
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
SecState	Secretary of State
SIGINT	signals intelligence
SOFA	status of forces agreement
STC	standard telegraphic code
TACAIR	tactical air
TACC	tactical air control center
TFA	Task Force Alpha
TOT	time over target
UDL	unit detail list
USAF	U.S. Air Force
USARSUPTHAI	U.S. Army Support Command, Thailand
USDAO	U.S. Defense Attache Office
USG	U.S. Government
USMC	U.S. Marine Corps
USSAG/7AF	U.S. Support Activities Group/Seventh Air Force



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